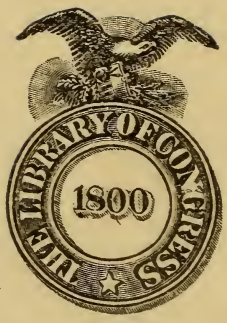

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

BEING

A CONSIDERATION OF THE GROUNDS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF, AND ESPECIALLY OF THE EVIDENCES OF DIVINE REVELATION IN THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE

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To My Wife, Mary,

WHOSE LOVE HAS LIGHTENED ALL MY CARES,
AND WHOSE SYMPATHY HAS STRENGTHENED ME IN EVERY
GOOD PURPOSE AND WORK.

PREFACE.

One who ascends a mountain sees the landscape below changing on his view from every new point of observation. The general features of forest and field, river and plain, are much the same, but the outlines of the picture are changed. The horizon falls further away; new mountains show their misty tops, and new realms come faintly into view. Meantime objects near at hand appear to change in relative importance; some that were conspicuous sink out of sight, and others, which they for a time concealed, stand out in bold profile.

Increasing knowledge furnishes to each succeeding generation a new view point from which to contemplate religion, natural or revealed. In this change of view we still recognize the old staple supports of faith —arguments which will forever stand firm from age to age; but new truths also come into view, and the old arguments give new suggestions. They change in their relative value when viewed through a changed perspective.

To-day discoveries in archæology are throwing light upon the religious faith of our race before the days of Moses or Abraham. The researches of historic criticism, while often announcing conclusions which are hasty and ill-sustained, are also giving suggestions which the sincere and patient searcher after truth must respect.

To-day skepticism gathers what strength it can from any new facts which are accepted, or new theories which are prevalent. The citadel of Christian faith is attacked with new weapons and by new methods. If these attacks do not imperil the faith of the man who has found experience an unassailable and irrefutable argument for his trust in Christ, they are perilous to those who are occupied still about doctrines and theories and external evidences of Christianity, who are lingering in the outer court of the temple, and have not entered into the most holy place where the divine glory is directly revealed.

For these reasons there is needed, from time to time, a restatement of Christian evidences, such as, regarding any new truths which the researches of men have brought to light, and dealing fairly with prevalent phases of doubt, may serve the need of intelligent faith.

The Bible must be kept open to all the light which can be thrown upon it. Traditional faith, handed down through the Jewish and the Christian Church, is worthy of the highest veneration, and of itself must be held as an evidence of truth, next to demonstration. But the historic critic must not be ruled out of court without a hearing.

In these pages the writer sets forth the arguments which justify the Christian faith in his own mind, humbly desiring to contribute something to the defense of the truth.

Little Rock, Ark., August 30, 1902.

CONTENTS.

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

Relation of Reason and Faith.

The great truths which we hold, relating to the interests and issues of life, none of us have discovered for ourselves. We have received them upon the statement of others, and by faith in them; yet this faith is not without justification in reason. Our teachers were wiser than we; they were sincere, and their disposition toward us was kind. Our faith in them was, therefore, reasonable. It would have been unreasonable not to have believed.

But the truths which we have accepted by faith in others were not originally so received. They were the discoveries of research, the conclusions of logic, the lessons of experience. They had their proofs, and if we could know that any of them were without proofs in the minds of those who have taught them to us, we would now cast them away as things which none are authorized to believe or teach.

Faith, then, is only legitimate when it has its evidences in reason. The immediate ground of faith to us may be the authority of the teacher, but

the final, sufficient, and permanent foundation must be in truths which are well established, in things which lie within the range of certain knowledge.

In the development of our minds we seek, naturally, the ultimate foundations of belief in the knowledge of those truths by which belief was primarily established; we seek to pass beyond the mere word of the teacher to examine for ourselves the grounds of the teacher's authority. In short, if we seek to be teachers of truth, we must be prepared with evidences to sustain the doctrines we teach.

There comes a time when those who have been nurtured in the Christian faith, and who have received much upon the authority of the Church and the word of Christian parents and teachers, must propose for themselves to take this step; to examine the grounds of their faith; to pass beyond the authority of any mere statement of religious truth, from whatever source, and demand the reasons which justify such statements. This they must do if they would make their faith, in the best sense, a personal conviction, and be prepared to teach it to others or to defend it when opposed.

To enter upon the study of Christian evidences is, of itself, to confess the supremacy of reason in matters of religious belief. It is, in short, to summon our faith in Christ before the bar of reason to justify its existence and its claims.

Man has no higher duty than to exercise his reason diligently and sincerely, that he may know

what should be the character of his conduct and the supreme aim of his life.

He who believes in the existence of God cannot believe that he has created us without a purpose, nor can he think that we may find our chief good in disregarding that purpose. The truth is axiomatic, that to "fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man."

But if one would make the will of God the rule of his life, he must study the revelations of that will in his own moral instincts, in the order of nature, and in those truths that have been verified in the common experience of our race.

If there be any revelation of the divine will separate and distinct from this, and coming to us through supernatural agencies, it must still be tested by the light which comes from natural sources. A special revelation may give us truths which the volume of nature does not unfold, but it must still be in harmony with nature's teachings. It may bring to us truths which reason could never discover, and yet it must not contradict that which reason has discovered or experience attested.

Reason has authority, therefore, to examine that which claims to be a supernatural revelation from God, and to accept or reject the claim as the evidence may justify. Indeed, to make such examination is the bounden duty of every seeker after truth. It is only by such an examination that a strong and sincere faith can be established.

If it be objected that this view leaves divine rev-

elation to be judged by human reason, we only answer that there must be within us power and authority to judge, else there can be no judgment; and if no judgment, no conviction and no faith. We take the ground, unequivocally, that there can be no faith contrary to reason. Your faith may be at some points contrary to my reason, or my faith may be contrary to your reason, and the faith of us both contrary to right reason; yet we maintain, without the slightest misgiving, that in each individual mind faith and reason must be in harmony, and that no man can believe what his own reason contradicts.

That we may not be misunderstood at this vital point, we grant that spiritual life has its own testimony of spiritual things; that it passes into realms of experience all its own; and that what appears to the carnal man a faith against reason may be, in truth, a faith based upon a higher reason than he has attained to. As the astronomer has conceptions of the universe which are beyond the thoughts of the clown, so to the mind that is wont to contemplate spiritual things, and to the moral nature prepared for the highest spiritual experiences, truths appear which lie beyond the faith of such as lead an earthly, sensuous life. Thus it is that God manifests himself to his own as he doth not unto the world.

Faith reaches beyond all the demonstrations of reason. It is the outlook of reason from that little territory which she has been able to compass to

the boundless realm of truth beyond. In order to be assured of a thing as existing, it is not necessary to take its measure or determine its distance. Faith apprehends that which is too vast to be bounded and too shadowy to be defined. It looks at the spiritual and the infinite as men look upon the dim outline of a great continent seen far across a channel or strait; and some are confident, and some doubt, and some declare that they cannot see anything at all. But the indistinctness is not vagueness; it is only distance, and the cloud is in the eye of him that doubts, and does not wrap that distant shore. Men of stronger vision catch a view—a faint and far-off view, but it is enough for assurance. If challenged, they could not define clearly between the blue of the ocean and the mountain coast, and even their proofs would not serve dimmer eyes than their own; and yet they know, beyond a peradventure, that land is there. Their assurance has its substantial evidences, and those evidences are based on experiences of things more defined and objects nearer at hand. They have looked upon the mountain range, which an inexperienced eye would have mistaken for a cloud bank, and they have marked and studied the perspective of distance. They have grown accustomed to viewing objects at sea. From jutting headlands, or the decks of ships, they have seen the island coast and the outline of the promontory. They see and know. They are assured, but cannot convey to others fully the evidences which satisfy

themselves. They know for themselves and not for another.

Such is faith, and such its relation to things which we are wont to say are known because they can be verified. It will be seen that the legitimacy of faith is to be tested by things known. There must be a harmony between that which is believed and that which can be proved.

We have a certain range of knowledge which comes to us through our natural capacities and the objects of nature about us. This knowledge a divine revelation cannot disregard. Indeed, we can only feel the authority of such revelation when we find that what it reveals is so linked in harmony with what we know that we cannot neglect the teaching of this revelation without our own intellectual confusion, and without rejecting the very basis of knowledge.

Our unaided sight makes us familiar with many things. But there are worlds of which we would scarcely dream without the telescope or microscope. One who has no knowledge of the microscope or the wonders it reveals will laugh at the thought that there are myriads of living creatures in the sparkling water-drop. He holds the clear water in the sunlight, he tests it with his eye, and says, "They are not there." But you adjust the microscope, and bid him look. He sees now the myriad life. Will he say, "This is a delusion; I will not believe that this glass brings me a new revelation"? You will show him then that this glass is

constructed with strict regard to the laws of seeing. You will show him that it does not distort vision, but aids it. Now, since the laws of seeing are not violated by this instrument, you will show him that he must accept its revelations or disbelieve those laws. If he does the latter, he is compelled to go back upon all that his natural sight has shown to him, and to distrust it. Then is he plunged into utter skepticism, and compelled, in order to deny the microscope, to deny the testimony of his unaided senses.

Such are the relations which must subsist between natural and revealed religion. We must find, as the only sufficient reason for believing the Bible, that we cannot logically disbelieve it, and that we cannot reject its doctrines and teachings without our own utter confusion in regard to the conditions of knowledge and our conceptions of moral truth.

These suggestions will indicate the method of our inquiry.

CHAPTER II.

Existence of God—Belief in God Essential to Philosophy.

To begin to reason assumes some unquestioned truths by which reason must be guided. It is in vain that we draw out the links of logic with hope to reach and bind any conclusion if the hither end of the chain be not fastened.

Mathematics must have its axioms, and so must philosophy; and these axioms the mind must supply out of itself. These axioms of reason we call intuitive ideas. These ideas which we call intuitive are the ideas of causation, eternity, infinity, and the absolute.

We do not insist that these ideas, or any defined ideas, exist in the mind of a child at its birth. Neither will we deny that it is the function of the senses to awaken the mind to action. Perhaps without some sort of sensation even self-consciousness would not be reached. Sensation gives us facts of the outer world, but the mind supplies out of its own endowment truths in respect to which all facts must be considered, and furnishes thus the laws of thought by which the material furnished by sensation is taken up and made to conduct to conclusions, the result of reflection and reason. If we had naught but sensation, the mind would receive passively, as a mirror, the ever-fleeting reflections of

outer objects, but would be taught no lessons, and could form no theories or systems of thought, and reach no conclusions. The mind is furnished in its own endowment with the power of reasoning from the facts which sense reveals.

That any truth may be accepted as intuitive, it must be such as is born in the first labor of human thought, always present and necessary in our thinking, and so, uniform and universal in the processes of human reasoning.

We have said causation, eternity, infinity, and the absolute are intuitive ideas. It is impossible to separate from our thought of things the idea of cause. Reason proceeds upon that idea, and upon it only can proceed, whether we move forward or backward, considering what will result from things we see or what they have resulted from. Nothing which we behold is taken, or can be taken, to be original and uncaused. Reason seeks the cause of things; and accepting all that now appears as both result and secondary cause, it also, upon the idea of causation, seeks the consequences of things.

Again, things transpire in time. But limit to time is inconceivable. Whatever duration is measured, it cannot be thought of as the beginning or end of time. We think of the beginning and end of life, the beginning and end of worlds. Time, as the measure of a certain order of events, has beginning and end. So, at the consummation and close of a dispensation the seer of Patmos heard an angel cry, "Time shall be no more!" But before

this earth existed eternity was, and beyond eternity. It is impossible to think otherwise.

We see things in space, but we can no more limit space than time. We extend the material until we contemplate worlds from which the swift messenger, light, requires thousands of years to reach our earth. Then thought doubles and trebles the distance, and deems itself no nearer the bound of space. Since space bounds all things, we can only think of space as bounded by space. Therefore that space should have limits is unthinkable.

So of the absolute. We cannot contemplate any excellence without the thought of the more excellent. Power under any limitations suggests greater power; goodness under any limitations suggests greater goodness. From the conditioned thought flies forward to the unconditioned, and recognizing the wise, the good, the strong, reckons that these have their fountain in the all-wise, the all-good, the almighty, the absolutely perfect.

It can hardly be allowed that in order to be accepted as intuitive these ideas should always be logically confessed in every system. A false reasoning may deny the only premises upon which reason can build, and so end in annulling reason itself. Agnosticism is not philosophy, but the denial that philosophy is possible; it is not reason, but the distrust of reason which accepts no conclusion. In order to justify itself, it must prove that nothing can be proved. It is not the normal condition of any mind, but a perversion of mind.

We return to the idea of causation, and state that this idea of cause, which is inseparable from all processes of thought, is the root idea of a God, a great First Cause, Creator and Ruler of the world. This idea of a God has been conspicuous in all the history and development of human thought. The idea of causation has clothed itself with personal atributes and powers according to the capacity of the human mind in its various stages of development where no light of divine revelation shone. It is therefore often stated that the idea of God is intuitive, and the statement is often contradicted. But certainly no one would speak of the idea of God, as revelation gives it, or as philosophy has developed it, as intuitive. Such a statement could not be made to include anything which has been added by logical development or revelation to the original and essential idea of cause. To say, on the other hand, that the very existence of the atheist and the infidel refutes the idea that the thought of God is intuitive, is to misrepresent the claim. The refutation to be valid must be directed against the root idea of causation, and it must show us a mind with normal capacity and development in which that idea of cause has not arisen or is not accepted.

The idea of a great First Cause has no history in human thought. It has no history in the individual mind. Atheism has never been found to be the natural or normal attitude of human intelligence. As to the root idea of God in causation, none have been found originally denying it, nor can it logical-

ly be denied; and, as we have seen that the idea of cause has always clothed itself with personality in the mind of man in his primitive state, and that besides this the ideas of the infinite, the eternal, and the absolute are fundamental in human thought, we may safely say that the idea of God is intuitive —not the God of revelation, or of philosophy, for all ideas of God are less than the true and perfect—but the germ idea of an intelligent Agent, enthroned over the powers of nature and the destiny of man. Luthardt rightly declares: "An intuitive conviction of God dwells in the human mind. We can by no means free ourselves of the notion of a God. We cannot think of ourselves, we cannot think of the world, without involuntarily connecting therewith the idea of God. Our thoughts hasten past the visible and the finite toward a supreme, invisible, infinite Being, and cannot rest till they have attained this goal. We are obliged to think of God. Consciousness of God is as essential an element of our mind as self-consciousness.

But primary truths, furnished by intuition, must bear the test of logic. They must be found to be in harmony with legitimate conclusions drawn from any premise established, or any facts which reason can accept as such. Not capable of direct demonstration, they must still be incapable of refutation, or even of being rendered doubtful. All truth should support them, and every point of view reveal them. That a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, is not capable of direct

geometrical demonstration, but any other position is capable of being refuted. Thus it must be with the foundations of our faith.

The belief in God is fundamental in true philosophy or any system of morals. If not first in chronological order among the conceptions of the human mind, it is first in its logical relations to all religious or moral ideas and convictions.

It is often stated, even by theologians, that the existence of God is not capable of proof, and is, therefore, a subject of faith, rather than of positive knowledge. This statement is often misconstrued, as if the idea of a God had not adequate support. The agnostic uses it as if it were an admission fatal to the Christian's faith. He says, "No man knows, or can know, whether there be a God or not." But we undertake to prove that faith in God is necessary both to the intellectual and moral world, and that the denial of this great truth would be the denial of all knowledge. We undertake, in other words, to prove either that we know that there is a God or that we cannot know anything at all.

I begin with the recognition of intelligence—the power in man of perceiving and knowing truth. To deny this is to despair of knowledge and to conclude that nothing can be known.

I am, then, an intelligent being, and capable of knowledge. What is that, then, which I call knowledge? and by what process attained? What I call knowledge I have gathered from the world about me; but on what conditions? Can I find

knowledge where it is not? or can I gather thought where none is expressed? or can that which is not the expression of intelligence convey intelligence to me?

I take up this book. It bears the name of Shakespeare. I peruse its pages. My mind is informed; thought is awakened; knowledge is communicated. But I get out of this book only the thought that is expressed in it; and the book itself does not think. It stands as a medium through which intelligence reaches me from another mind. It is from that mind I am instructed. My own intelligence is developed, instructed, only when I am put in communion with intelligence elsewhere. I can gather no thought, no knowledge, where they are not expressed.

I now ask, Whence have I gathered, primarily, all that I call knowledge? From the book of nature. Whether it be of science or of experience—of whatever character my knowledge may be—I have gathered it from this source, or it has been gathered for me from this source by others. But has any study of nature conveyed actual knowledge to me? I answer, Not unless knowledge is there expressed. I can read in the book only that which is there written. A chaos without law or order, and where no relations are fixed, no causes apparent, no sequences established, would convey no knowledge to the human mind, because it would have no suggestion of knowledge in its arrangement. Only where order, purpose, and law are

manifest can knowledge be gained. The work of nature can inform my intelligence only upon the condition of being itself an expression of intelligence. If I miss the idea of design and law in nature, it teaches me nothing. Indeed, I must recognize purpose there, or turning back upon that which I call my own reason, as also a part of this order of nature, regard it too as without purpose or end. If I claim any knowledge, it is only such as nature reveals. But nature reveals neither intelligence nor knowledge, if it be not a product of intelligence, if intelligence have not written its record upon it everywhere.

We conclude, then, that no other proof is needed that nature is the work of intelligence than this, namely, that nature is intelligible. If nature conveys intelligence to me, it is because intelligence is expressed in it; and if intelligence and knowledge are not expressed in nature, what I have been wont to call knowledge is a delusion, and I know nothing. Cut off from any fountain or source of intelligence, what I call my own intelligence has no longer any purpose or meaning. An eye upon which no light ever falls, an ear upon which no sound-wave ever beats, such were a faculty of intelligence to which no intelligence appeals in all the works of nature. Thus it is that I dare assert that I know there is a God, or else I know nothing. Looking forth upon a chance world, where no intelligence is expressed, I must confess that knowledge is impossible.

CHAPTER III.

The Existence of God—Belief in God Essential to Morals.

In the preceding chapter we proved that the idea of an intelligent First Cause is a necessity of philosophy, by showing that it cannot be rejected without confusing all our ideas of knowledge and plunging us into despair of knowing anything at all. In this we consider the relation of the idea of God to our conceptions of moral obligation.

Man is a moral being. He instinctively recognizes himself as such. In this sense of responsibility moral nature is only self-conscious—only recognizes itself as existing; and, surely, without such recognition of itself, it could have neither function nor existence.

None are so bold as to deny that man is a moral being. The maddest skeptic must acknowledge the obligations of truth, integrity, purity. Actions must ever be, to our thought, good or bad, and we must still distinguish the base and the noble in character. Our ideas of government, also, rest upon the conception of responsibility to moral law, and can only be justified by such a conception.

Now, it is sufficient to point simply to the practical fruits of this idea to prove that it represents that which is real and abiding. The welfare of states, of societies and individuals, is secured by

regard to what we call moral laws. That which is found to be for man's highest good—demanded by his nature and the conditions of his state—can never be false. It is to him a thing to be believed and regarded. Experience itself fully proves to man that his idea of moral obligation is not a delusion, but that in what he calls moral obligation he has found the fulcrum upon which human destiny is turning.

But moral obligation logically demands moral government. The moral sense is, indeed, a sense of responsibility to law; not springing from a previous conception of law, but prompted by a law within, and demanding the idea of a law external as the only explanation of its existence. Without the idea of accountability, no sense of obligation can exist. They are correlated.

Man cannot regard the ideas of right and wrong as representing nothing but himself. Right and wrong must have some other source than man's own will. If we stop with the human will alone, moral obligation is nothing. Man making laws for himself is only proposing to follow his own pleasure. Can that which originates in the human will bind the human will? No sense of obligation is felt, save as we recognize a power and authority above us—conditions of well-being, under which we are forever bound.

Legislatures establish statutes which regulate the methods of business and the processes of administering justice. But no legislator thinks of

himself as the author of moral law. He only confesses and expresses it; he does not create it. Moral law is from above. If drawn forth from his own consciousness, or from his experience, man still recognizes it as the handwriting of God upon nature. Moral obligation is only confessed, not created, in human legislation. But the idea of such obligation can alone give birth to laws and governments.

Even the ten commandments, the oldest written moral code, and that which is still received as the most perfect, did not come to men as the establishment of obligations which did not previously exist, or as the revelation of duties before unknown. And it is fair to state that, if the decalogue itself were reversed, so that we should read, "Thou shalt kill," "Thou shalt steal," "Thou shalt bear false witness," no man could receive it as declaring the will of the Creator.

There is a heart-written law which no revelation can ignore. As no human being can hold himself to be the author of moral law or to have done any more in his moral teachings than give expression to obligations which rest upon all men and which all consciences must feel, so, in the administration of law, it is always assumed that there are fundamental moral convictions which need not to be taught, which belong to all men, and of which none are ignorant. If one have signed notes or obligations ignorantly, the law will admit the ignorance in his defense; but if the act in question

have reference to any general moral principle, no plea of ignorance will avail. If the murderer should plead, and even make it appear, that he did not know that the State had any law against murder, it would avail him nothing. He would be dealt with just as any other murderer, and that because it is assumed that the law, "Thou shalt not kill," is written upon the hearts of all men. Thus are our ideas of moral obligation separated from all human legislation. So clearly do they stand as relating us to some Power above ourselves, which, in all our conceptions of morals, we only confess and seek to regard.

As our ideas of moral law must carry us beyond man himself, so, also, must they carry us beyond the mere order of nature.

We have proved by experience that our natures have need of law. Human happiness is promoted by government. And just as governments are more perfectly developed to promote what we call virtue, and suppress what we call vice, is human welfare thereby secured.

The legislator says it is enough to know that this or that is expedient, that the history of the human race and the long run of human experience have demonstrated that such and such courses of action conduce to the general weal. But we cannot rest in the idea of expedience.

If we are pointed to expedience as the foundation of law, we find in expedience these suggestions against that conclusion. Expedience is

marked with the character of universality; for the law, which is assumed to be based upon it, is for every man in the State alike.

We find, further, that there is in expedience the character of permanence. That which is expedient in moral conduct in this generation is expedient always. Experience has proved it. Thus what is called expedience reveals an order of nature, changeless and everlasting, which points the way of human happiness or misery, and we are borne back, necessarily, beyond any idea of mere expedience or experience, to the recognition of immutable law, asserting itself always in the constitution of things—a law without variableness or shadow of turning, and which alone can make it expedient to do this or that. Such a law we must interpret as the purpose of the Creator.

But the question now arises, Why should this order of nature, under which we are bound, have respect especially to moral life and action? For man perceives that it is not expedient for him to live as the beast. He has instincts and capabilities which belong to what he calls moral nature, and they open the paths of moral action, and in moral conduct he experiences that his highest elevation is reached and his greatest good attained. Thus man has the proof that he belongs to an order of things which finds in moral life and experience suggestion of its ultimate design and its highest end.

Matter is inert. It has no intellectual or moral

power. It is not capable of design. If, then, we find in the order of nature a design constantly fulfilling itself in intellectual and moral natures, what can we conclude but that the whole order of nature is the expression of an intelligent purpose and a moral end? If we recognize moral nature or obligation, we cannot rest either in ourselves, in the human will, or in the order of the material world, but must go back of these to the idea of a moral governor of the world.

The following argument, likewise, seems legitimate. We have a conception of justice. We must think of the principle of justice as invariable and eternal. But what is justice? It has no abstract existence. It does not exist by itself. I may think of beauty or goodness, but they do not dwell alone. If I find them, I find them in some being or object. They are qualities—attributes. Now, justice is but a quality of character or an attribute of moral being. It must have its basis in moral nature. But if justice be an immutable principle, it must abide in an immutable being; and if it be an eternal principle, it must abide in an eternal being. We must conclude, therefore, that there can be no philosophy which can consistently hold an immutable and eternal principle of justice apart from an immutable and eternal God. Law demands a lawgiver. Purpose demands a designer. Moral principles demand moral being.

CHAPTER IV.

The Existence of God—The Cosmological Argument.

Whether we hold matter to be eternal, or that it was brought into existence by a Creator, yet in the arrangements of matter, and in the order of nature, a designing cause is manifest.

We find connected with matter phenomena which no properties of matter or laws governing it will explain. If we are rightly taught in natural science, inertia is an essential property of matter. This is true, notwithstanding there are chemical agents which, in combinations, designed or accidental, may evolve force, movement, and arrangement. Subterranean fires burn, and mountains are upheaved; electric fires are unchained, and the lightnings play; crystals, perfect in mathematical form, are mysteriously shaped. But these things give us no suggestion of the origin of that stupendous harmony and all-embracing order which bind and sway the universe; and it is safe, so far as anything we know of matter is concerned, to say, as taught in our philosophies, that inertia is an essential property of matter. At rest, it can never set itself in motion, and in motion it can never bring itself to rest. In whatever state it is found, in that state it must remain until some external agency, operating upon it, change its condition.

The motion of the planets, therefore, becomes a mystery which no laws or principles of matter will explain. That which we pronounce inert is in motion upon every side. Through sublime orbits, in satellite and solar systems, in group and cluster systems, the worlds circle and sweep. If these worlds were brought to rest, they would never resume their flight or spring to their orbits again. But now their movements are ruled to such perfect order of course and time that eclipses may be unerringly calculated for past or future centuries.

The fundamental tenets of materialism, as it is to-day opposed to the doctrine of an intelligent cause of things, are these: (1) Matter is eternal; (2) Force is persistent; (3) Motion is continuous. These propositions are intended to suppress the whole question of a direct creation. With the first of these propositions only we shall deal.

The nebular hypothesis of creation, suggested by Laplace, afterwards elaborated by the author of "The Vestiges of Creation," is attractive to many minds. Assuming the tenets of materialism as stated, it attempts to conceive of the matter which now composes the universe as in a state which could be reduced to its present order by the forces assumed. The outlines of the system are briefly stated thus:

All the matter of the universe, as now organized into worlds and systems, previously existed in a state intensely heated and rarified—what the the-

orists term "a universal fire mist." In particles of matter free to move to a common center, such movement gives a rotary motion to the mass, as the particles of water moving to a common center —a hole in the bottom of a bucket—creates a whirlpool.

The attraction of gravitation, drawing the particles of this hypothetical "fire mist" toward a common center, gave a rotary motion to the whole. The process of cooling went forward with the process of condensation. The outer crust hardened. The heated inner mass, still shrinking, broke loose from the crust, which sometimes, broken into fragments, gathered into orbs revolving in orbits around the great central mass, or remained as rings encircling it. Thus the present order was evolved.

This theory does not relieve us of the necessity of supposing a direct creation. For, if it be claimed that matter is eternal, it is readily answered that, begin when and where we will to evolve the present order—and that which comes as the result of changes must have a beginning —there must be still assumed an eternal existence of matter, lying back of any change or state assumed. Matter, therefore, could not have eternally existed in this hypothetical "fire mist," with the laws forever acting upon it which have brought it to the present state. All changes have their time and their history, and the forces which produce them must alike have their time of duration measured by the changes they produce.

The nebulous state of matter, if it be claimed that matter is eternal, can no more be assumed as eternal than the state we now see. Nor by adding both, or assuming a transition from one to the other, can we get the idea of eternity. It is just as reasonable to postulate matter in cold and opaque mass before the nebulous state as it is to postulate the nebulous state before the present. Whatever suggestions we may find that the matter of the worlds was once in this heated nebula, we can no more begin with matter in that form than in the present, without a direct creation. And since we are under the necessity of thinking of some beginning, of any defined state, and some guiding purpose, it seems far more consistent to accept that condition of things which expresses the Creator's purpose as the beginning than to assume that a God of infinite wisdom and power, though purposing such a condition as a goal, planned and labored toward it through immeasurable ages ere he could reach it. Conceive of matter in any state we will, the doctrine of the eternity of matter compels us to assume that before that state matter eternally existed, and the laws which evolved that state eternally operated and yet nothing *began*. For, if matter *began* to exist in any state, or laws *began* to operate upon it in any state, then direct creation is confessed, and all that was thence evolved must be accepted as the result of a designing Cause.

We are aware that the materialist also gives the

theist his problem to solve. He returns the argument made against the eternity of matter in much the same form against the idea of an eternal God. "For," says he, "assume that matter began at some time to be created and organized by the direct power of a God who is from eternity, then place that beginning of creation when you will, you are forced to assume, before such beginning, a God of power, will, and purpose, who did nothing. If you tell us there was a beginning to the works of God, you must think of an eternity preceding in which God did not work at all.

No one can deny the gravity of this difficulty. We can only answer, that, since we see order, law, and design impressed upon matter everywhere, and must think of mind as the only explanation of this, we are compelled, logically, to put mind before matter, and to believe that it has presided over all the adjustments of the material creation. We can only rest upon this logical order of things. Eternity, as respects matter or God, is "a vast unfathomable sea where all our thoughts are drowned."

The mystery of life confronts us like the mystery of the order of the material world. The oak tree comes from the acorn, and the acorn comes from the oak. It was not always so. But who will tell us which was first, the oak or the acorn? The child is both offspring and father of the man. But were there not once human parents who never

were children, or human children who had no human parents?

What we mean to suggest is that the present order, under which we see life propagated and preserved, gives us no suggestion of its origin. The order which we see is but an accident of life itself. There was once an oak that never grew from an acorn, or there was once an acorn that never grew from an oak. The fixed law that every seed produces after its kind leaves the beginning of all a mystery that receives not the least suggestion for its solution in anything we see. The law by which life is perpetuated, the conditions under which it is bound, give no suggestion of its origin.

Materialistic evolution suggests that life is produced of matter; that some chance combination of elements produced life in its lowest form, and that from this primordial germ all life has been evolved. This was a germ of marvelous potency, most surely, when we consider the measureless range and variety of animal life as we now behold it. An equal marvel is, that this law of evolution, which has from such small capital produced so much, can now, with the immense resources on hand, produce nothing; for in all the range of our actual knowledge we are not able to show that any new species of creatures has been produced in the way suggested.

But this theory of evolution is not only unsustained by anything we know, but is contradicted by the most obvious truths. Simply stated, it as-

sumes that life is the result of certain combinations of matter—that the life of the first living thing was begotten by the material elements of the body in which that life was manifested. Yet it seems clear that life is not the result of organism. The life which inhabits my body did not wait for the body to be built. There was not the perfect body, in bone and muscle, nerve and fiber, and then the first throb and pulsation of life. But life began to move and build itself a house. The inhabitant was not produced by the house in which it dwells, but it built the house. The life that animates the body built up the body which it animates. Organism is the product of life, and not life of organism.

If we ascend to the higher form of life in intelligence, we find a life which is still more clearly marked as being neither the product of matter nor bound under the conditions which control matter. True it is that this intellectual life, as we are able to observe it, is connected with physical organism under conditions which we are able to point out. But it exhibits characters, nevertheless, which assert its supremacy over material laws.

The life of the plant may be shown to depend upon thermal and atmospheric conditions and upon earth and moisture; and one may, with measurable certainty, apply forces to control or suppress physical life. We may measure accurately the forces which will modify or destroy physical life. If it is inscrutable in its origin, it is at least

conditioned within the range of material agencies. But thought will not be controlled. Its movements can be determined by no force. They cannot be certainly predicted. Purposes are formed with the sense of freedom, and no power is found to compel them. No influences bind the will. No force can be arrayed upon the material side to regulate the movements of intelligence. Here is a life unconditioned as to its movements, so far as we know.

Intelligence asserts itself over matter. It calls into service material laws. It makes dead matter its medium, and turning the material world into its passive instrument, man's thought flashes round the globe, annihilating time and space. Man finds himself, by virtue of his intelligence, a designing agent, an efficient cause. If, then, he sees about him the marks of design on that work which is infinitely beyond and above his power, what can he conclude but that mind is superior to matter, is not born from matter, and that, infinitely exalted above himself, there must be an intelligent Cause of this human intelligence and of all things?

It is agreed by metaphysicians that the idea of causation is intuitive and essential to the human mind. We cannot rest in the mere recognition of things as existing. We must inquire whence they came; we must demand for them a cause; and if we see upon the things about us the marks of design, we must think that the Cause of all things is an intelligent agent. If we hold that there are

manifestations of wisdom and power in the world, we must believe in an almighty and wise Creator of the world. We intuitively demand a cause for that which we see. But this chain of causes and effects cannot be endless. That we also clearly recognize. Therefore, whatever fancies we may indulge of evolution, whatever measures of time we may assign to the unfolding of things as they are, we must rest at least in a First Cause, beyond which we cannot pass, and short of which we cannot stop; and, if we acknowledge intelligence in ourselves, and the marks of intelligence upon things around us, an intelligent Cause is the only logical—may we not dare to say the only possible?—conclusion.

CHAPTER V.

The Existence of God—The Teleological Argument.

We have declared our acceptance of the doctrine of intuitive ideas as the necessary basis of all reasoning. We are not called upon to furnish a category of those ideas which may be classed as intuitive, but shall keep within well-defined bounds in all which we employ as such in this argument. Three ideas, which the greatest philosophers accept as intuitive, will serve our purpose.

First, the idea of Cause. Sensation gives us external objects and phenomena; but sensation does not give us the idea of causation. In the vast universe it is but an infinitesimal point that falls under our observation, and of things manifest to our senses, even the proximate causes are seldom seen. Our observation and experience are limited to the minutest points of time and space. They could not authorize us, did they reveal the causes of many things, to demand a cause for all things. Yet this, which the facts furnished by sensation can never authorize us to do, we find ourselves compelled to do in every exercise of reason. It may even be said that sensation does not furnish the cause of anything. We see certain results from certain conditions of matter, as the growth of the plant from conditions of earth and air, of light and

moisture and heat, and we speak of these as proximate causes. Yet they are only the modes of action of a cause that is hidden. We understand that these things are necessary for the growth of the plant, but no one knows *why* the plant, thus furnished, lives and grows. The real cause of things always eludes the senses, and no man claims to have discerned the cause of any phenomenon in nature about him. Yet, at sight of any phenomenon, be it but the falling of a leaf, reason seizes upon the idea of cause and instantly carries that idea through all the ranges of the universe, asserting, without the slightest misgiving, that everything has a cause. Hence we conclude that the idea of cause is intuitive; that it is furnished out of the human mind itself; that it comes forth necessarily in any exercise of the reason, and that its basis is in pure reason, to which it is always a necessity.

The idea of the Infinite, like the idea of Cause, is ever present, and necessarily present, in our reason. Sensation does not reveal the infinite; it does not fall within the scope of observation; it does not come within the range of experience. And yet it is impossible for thought to rest within the limits of the finite, as it is impossible to fix bounds to time or space. Thought, in all its ranges, embraces only the finite, but it apprehends the infinite, though it cannot comprehend it; and the highest inspiration of the human genius is an influence from that realm of awe and mystery. This influence was well expressed by Newton, who

said that he "felt like a child gathering pebbles upon the shore of the ocean." His thought was not upon the pebbles, but upon the ocean. The grandeur of the prospect for a great mind was not in the shore that the eye could measure, but in the shoreless and immeasurable deep. An egotistic sensualist, who deems himself simply an animal, born of the clod, may boast of his wisdom, but philosophic minds, since the days of Plato, have been most deeply impressed by the awe of the infinite. When we see the limited, the conditioned, the finite, we must think of the unbounded, the unconditioned, the infinite.

Take the idea of the Good. Is it not always present? Is there not a principle in human nature which compels distinctions of good and bad in all our thoughts of actions, principles, or character? But the perfectly good we have never seen. In the characters about us many degrees of goodness are recognized, but the absolutely good is not found. We have, therefore, the idea of the good by virtue of a necessary principle of our nature, and the idea of the perfectly good lying beyond all that observation or experience has furnished. From hence our ideals are born; but we reject our ideals when wrought out, and demand higher ideals still. The perfectly good must be, though no man has attained it, and though all our ideals come short of it.

Accepting now the thought of ultimate and efficient cause, the thought of the infinite and the thought of the absolutely good as intuitive, that

is to say furnished by reason itself, and necessarily present in all systems of thought, we proceed to note that these thoughts not only arise, as suggested, out of our own reason, but that they cannot be set aside without the overthrow of reason itself. Shall I reject the idea of causation as delusive? Then all investigation must cease; all attempt to correlate truth in logical order is vain. For that logical order is not an order simply of uniform sequence, as Mr. Hume would claim. The idea of cause cannot be thus cast aside or lost in the sequence of phenomena. To men upon this earth, day and night have succeeded each other through all the generations. Man has no experience contrary to this, and this experience is uniform and universal; and yet men know very well that this experience is purely incidental, and that the earth might be so adjusted in relation to the sun as to give one hemisphere perpetual day and the other perpetual night. The idea of cause and effect is not obtained from sequence, nor limited to it. Observation deals with facts, reason with principles; and reason cannot surrender this idea of causation without confessing her own constitution and nature a lie, and renouncing all search for truth as hopeless. Nor can reason contemplate any object under the idea of finiteness without having in thought infinity. So in regard to the idea of absolute goodness, it cannot be surrendered without the destruction of all moral ideas, as shown in a previous chapter.

We ask now, Whence came these intuitive ideas, and what do they represent?

Admitting that they arise necessarily out of the human mind, is man the author of them? Have they their sole and ultimate cause in human thought, and do they represent nothing beyond it?

Man conceives of these thoughts as representing to his mind universal and eternal truths. Does he regard himself as the author of these truths? Certainly not. Truth were then but a phantom of the brain, with no objectivity, revealing nothing, signifying nothing. The human mind perceives truth, but it is not the source of it. A man will say, "My thought," "My reason," but he can never say "My truth." Man, limited and finite, perceives truths which represent to him principles changeless and universal. This idea of causation represents a principle which runs through all worlds, from everlasting. This principle was before man was upon the earth, and would abide unchanged if man were no more. So also in regard to the ideas of the infinite and the absolutely good. We are ready to assert with confidence that without that which these ideas represent the worlds of matter and of mind could not be at all. They are indeed eternal verities, which lead us back, beyond all created things, since without them things could not be.

Thus what we call intuitions represent to us eternal verities. The ideas of Cause, of the Infinite and the Good, appeal to something beyond

themselves—something higher than man, something greater than the universe itself, since, without them, this universe could not be; and yet the universe does not fully contain or exhaust them.

To what conclusion, then, must we come? Eternal principles demand a basis for their existence and a condition for their manifestation. Goodness is not an abstraction, nor is Cause an abstraction. Goodness demands being; it is an attribute of being. We must trace it to that source, or it means nothing. If we find goodness, we must find it in some being. If it manifests itself, it manifests itself in being. We must follow this angel of light up beyond all creatures and all ideals to the One eternal and infinitely good; or, having pursued her through the whole universe, lose her at last in primeval darkness, and be forced to pronounce her a chimera. "There is none good save One, that is God."

The idea of Cause makes equal demand for the recognition of a being in whom ultimate and efficient cause may be found.

We have referred to proximate causes, which we are wont in our common speech to call causes, but which are only operations and agents that represent a cause. The growth of the plant has been referred to. It is a resultant of many agencies. What we note here is that no single thing is ever seen to operate as an agent at all. The light, the heat, the moisture, the air, and the earth combine to produce the results we see. No single one of

these alone accomplishes anything. The various elements of matter are capable of wondrous combinations, and out of these combinations spring wondrous results, but apart each is powerless; nor in all their combinations do we detect any secret of power. Results are inexplicable. The methods only we see. Thus it appears to us that no single element in nature is found to possess the potency of causation, nor yet do we detect that potency in any combination of elements. Besides, could we regard these things as causes, it could only be in a secondary sense, and we should still demand the cause of causes and seek that cause of causes in unity, in a self-acting agent, in short, in an intelligent Creator.

Eternal verities must represent to us eternal being, and in that being we must find perfection of nature—infinite goodness, infinite wisdom, infinite power. The only approach to such a being man finds in himself; in an intelligence that can, in some faint measure, comprehend the intelligence revealed in the order and vastness, the beauty and adaptation of nature, and in a will whereby he finds himself, within his limitations, a self-acting agent. Man gives us the type of that all-perfect One and reveals, on a finite scale, these attributes to which we are compelled to add the idea of the unconditioned and infinite.

I conclude, then, that as the senses put me in communion with the physical world, so do intuitions put me in communion with the spiritual.

They represent the power of direct perception upon the spiritual side of my nature as the senses upon the physical side. Both are alike a part of my nature, and must be accorded equal authority in any true system of philosophy. We cannot deny intuitions with Locke, nor deny them objectivity with Kant. We must trust sensation and intuition alike. We must believe that they put us in communion with the worlds to which we, in this twofold nature, are related. Such is that eclecticism, which is the strongest current of philosophical thought at the present day. We know God as we know the works of nature about us. The intuitions which belong to reason—which are necessary to reason—are God's work, and to be trusted as the senses are to be trusted. The intuitive convictions come from the objects to which they point, as the impressions of the senses come from the objects which awaken them. A speculative philosophy has denied objectivity to the latter as it has denied any revelation of truth to the former, and with as much reason. The philosophy of common sense will not begin by making human nature a lie upon either side.

We can trust intuitions. All creatures below us trust their instincts. Those impressions which belong to nature are God's voice in nature. The bird, the bee, and the worm trust their instincts, and their instincts never lie; they never mislead. The worm that crawls in the dust has in itself the promise and potency of a higher life, and an instinct

which is a safe guide to that life. Prompted by this instinct, it prepares for the future. It selects its daily food in reference to the web that shall weave its shroud. It creeps aside at the appointed time and weaves that shroud about its body—a shield to protect it for a time from being devoured by other creatures. In due time it comes forth to a life wondrously changed; from creeping in the dust to float on gaudy wings and gather its dainty food from the cups of flowers. What if the worm should begin to philosophize, and begin so fatally, withal, as to deny the authority of its instincts? It would say: "Experience alone is my guide; I have a strange impulse in my nature, but experience has shown me nothing; I will not regard this impulse." The worm would perish—perish for its unbelief—perish for no sin but that of accepting the Spencerian philosophy. The fundamental error is not in following experience, but in refusing to recognize that which is inherent in nature itself as an experience, of all others the most significant and vital. Let it be understood, however, that neither intuition nor sensation gives us anything more than suggestions. The senses of the savage are as perfect as those of the philosopher. As it is possible for men with senses, perfect and in full exercise, to entertain the grossest and most erroneous conceptions of the material world, so the grossness of man's views of spiritual things argues nothing against the certainty and uniformity of intuitions.

Intuition gives suggestion of principles, not knowledge of things—principles from which things are logically inferred. The extent and correctness of knowledge, whether of things spiritual or material, depend upon our researches and reasonngs.

CHAPTER VI.

Revelation—Presumptive Evidence.

We believe in God. That faith the light of nature justifies, and even demands. Shall we go further and believe that God, the Creator of all, has given to man a special revelation of his character and will? Has he a purpose concerning man? and is it needful for man to know what that purpose is?

That Supreme Wisdom should create without a purpose, none can believe. God has a purpose, doubtless, in all inanimate things. In myriads of living creatures he has a purpose; but fixed laws drive them to their goal and destiny, and as they choose not that destiny they need no knowledge of it.

But man is endowed with reason and moral nature. He is conscious of power to choose the character of his own life. He believes that he is shaping for himself a destiny according as he obeys or disobeys the will of his Maker. Has he then any direct revelation of that will, any knowledge of the Creator's purpose, save that which nature's light has unfolded to his unaided reason?

It cannot be denied that God is able to reveal directly his character and will to man. Nature and her established laws cannot have exhausted the resources of Omnipotence. We cannot believe that man came into being by the will of a divine

Father who is unable to make himself known, directly, to his children. Blank atheism were more reasonable than that. We cannot believe that God has created man without any purpose as to his conduct. And since the conduct of a free moral intelligence is regulated by no inherent force, the will of God concerning man must be sought in some revelation addressed to his intelligence, and under which, as a self-determining agent, he is held to account.

It may be further confidently accepted that God would reveal himself directly to us, his creatures, if our good were to be promoted thereby. If our Creator be a benevolent being, this must follow. If he be a malevolent being, all things are evil and all hope is lost. Man is manifestly the object of the Creator's special care. His preëminence among the creatures declares this. Since all are subject to his will and power, it must appear that all were made for him. Their purpose is to do him service. More and more the high commission, "Subdue and have dominion," unfolds. More and more, by his progress in knowledge, is man enthroned as a ruler of this earth. He stands forth, in the light of facts, the focal point of divine purpose in the creation of the world.

Man has endowments which suggest direct relations to a Creator and moral Governor. He has a mind that reaches out after a knowledge of the Creator and his purposes. He has, in all stages of enlightenment—but the more as his knowledge is

increased—reckoned that his dignity and greatness were in thoughts and aspirations and faiths which outreach the ranges of earth and time. He has a mind to comprehend the great plans of the Creator of the world. From all other creatures he is distinguished by these high gifts. We may also believe that, if it were in the original purpose of the Creator to guide man by a direct revelation, he would have prepared his creature for such guidance by implanting in his nature an easy faith in the supernatural—that is to say, we should find man by nature disposed to look for special manifestations to him of the will of his Maker.

We observe that such a disposition has been clearly manifested by man through all his race history. It is by virtue of this inherent tendency that man has been made, under all conditions of his development, a religious being. A religious being by nature he certainly is. In all organizations of human society or government some sort of religion lies at the foundation, and whether it be superstitious or enlightened, crude or well defined, religious faith gives character to all national institutions and laws, and tone to man's convictions concerning his duty and destiny.

This religious tendency in our nature, this easy faith in the supernatural, some, by a strange inversion of logic, have appealed to as an argument against believing in a divine revelation. "For," say they, "what fact is more manifest in all the history of our race than this, that man has been prone

to superstition, and that much that he once believed to be directly from the gods has been found, under increased light, to belong to the categories of natural phenomena?" "The process," they tell us, "still goes on. Science is continually setting aside, as mere superstition, what was once devoutly held in religious faith. Should we not, from such lessons of the past, cease to concern ourselves about religion, accepting, as most reasonable, the conclusion that all faith in the supernatural is a superstition, which shall one day be outgrown, and the doctrine of a divine revelation forever cast away?"

Now we agree that the progress of knowledge has pruned away many superstitions which once encumbered religious faith. We will also allow that this process shall go forward, and admit, as probable, that the best instructed and most cautious religionists of to-day may still hold to errors which a future age will reject. We also agree that reason is the proper guide of man; that it should have free exercise, unchecked by any foregone or irrevocable conclusions; and that no set of teachers in any age dare say to the reason of a future generation, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." We can only count that faith sincere which appears to the individual who holds it to be in conformity with the best reason as he understands it.

Notwithstanding these admissions, we are bound still to hold that man's natural tendency to believe in things supernatural is itself strong presumptive

evidence of a supernatural revelation. This very endowment of the creature suggests the purpose of the Creator. As there would be no meaning or purpose in the eye without the light which enables us to see, or in the ear without the sound-waves which cause us to hear, so we must believe that this natural tendency to accept the supernatural, and to look for a direct revelation from God, is evidence of the Creator's purpose to give such a revelation. But as even sight and hearing often deceive and mislead us and need constant correction from reason and experience, so also it pertains to reason and experience to correct and guide this natural tendency of faith, lest it bear us away into a realm of shadows and deliver us up to false lights. But as we do not discard all the revelations of sight because of those deceptions which have been imposed upon it, so neither is it wise to discard all suggestions of this faith faculty simply because we have found that it needs guidance. That would be to cut ourselves off from infinite good in order to escape a partial evil. It would be burning the house to destroy the flies on the ceiling.

We cannot discard the function of faith any more than that of reason. But we must still require that reason be unchecked, and that to her dictates faith shall always submit. "Believing where we cannot prove," we must not believe against proof. Mysteries we will admit, absurdities we will reject. And, as faith has, in all past ages, held more or less of what was superstitious and false, we will not

deny that it may still be so with us, in any stage, and that our supreme duty is to seek to know rather than merely to believe. We cannot be philosophical without holding that, always, faith and reason should abide as equally essential in the operations of the human mind. In a well-balanced mind knowledge will never overthrow devoutness and faith in God.

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster.

But it may be asked: "Are not God's will and character manifest in nature to him who can read aright that record? And may we not reasonably believe that to that light alone it has pleased the Creator to leave us? Will it not be said no finite being can ever know God fully by any means? And since God, in justice, can only hold man to account according to his ability to know him, why object to the idea of being left to nature's teaching, since, if a direct revelation were given, it too must have its limits according to the limits of the human understanding?"

We answer that the *sort* of revelation which the heart of man most yearns for is of a kind that nature cannot give at all.

From the order of nature man might infer a God of infinite wisdom and power, yet he could never, from this source, learn God's overwatching care.

In nature we see only a fixed order—law, cold and inexorable. We could never get from nature the idea of help in need, or pardon of sin, or any possibility of spiritual communion and fellowship with our Maker. If out of his own heart, instinctively as a child flees to his parents, man should feel the prompting to look to God and cry to him for help, such cry would soon appear to be without reason, if no help were given. But if the cry were answered, then the fact of direct dealing of God with men would have to be admitted. Answer to prayer would itself be a special and direct manifestation of the Father to his child. Now it is just at this point that religion is most concerned. Religious faith concerns itself not so much about any specific fact or duty as about the one idea of direct divine care and fellowship. It is from that faith that love is born, and moral purpose developed, and all noble struggle inspired. Men are strong morally, according to their faith of holding direct relations with the moral Governor of the world. Set nature before us alone, or say that nature stands forever between us and God, and that all we can know of him is to be seen only in this inexorable machine, and then God is no longer personal in our thought, and no moral life or lesson comes to us from nature's teaching. On the other hand, let the faith in God, as a Father, who will directly regard our need and reveal himself to us, be once established, and all nature puts on a new

glory, and all the laws of nature are testimonies of our Father's love.

A child who has personal knowledge and experience of a father's love and care, and has enjoyed that father's society and fellowship, if removed to a distant land would be keen to interpret and wise to value and faithful to cherish every gift the father might afterwards send him. It would not be the utility of the gift for personal need that would make its value, so much as the testimony which it would constantly present of a loving relation to that father who gave it. The father would give himself in the gift, and the fellowship with the father would be to the child a food of the moral nature more valuable than any material good. It is thus that an experience of fellowship with God must prepare the way for a right interpretation of nature itself, or any ministering of nature to man's spiritual life. The question, then, as to the teaching of nature alone, as compared with a supernatural revelation of God to us, relates not to the extent of our knowledge in a given sphere, but the opening of a new sphere of knowledge and experience altogether. It is the question of fellowship and communion with our heavenly Father.

Our nature cries out for a knowledge of God, such as only a supernatural revelation can give. It is not his eternal power and wisdom that we long to know more about, but his relation to us, his mind toward us. Shall we, the highest of his creatures, dare to call him our Father who is in heaven?

Shall we believe that he cares for us, helps us, guides us? Shall we dare to pray and trust? And to what destiny are we traveling? And in what way would he have us go? The faith that unites us to God as our Father and Guide is the supreme need for the strength of our moral nature and for our happiness in this world.

The law of co-relation, which prevails through all God's works, is to us a strong assurance that these wants of mind and moral nature are not left unsupplied.

We would further suggest, among the inferential evidences of a divine revelation, the existence, from the remotest ages and among all people, of faith in personal and experimental relations to God. This belief is manifested in all forms of worship; in prayer and sacrifices, in praise and thanksgiving. All forms of religion are a testimony of a faith, perpetual and well-nigh universal among men, that as intellectual moral beings they have, through the ages, held direct communion with God. We are not able to see wherein nature alone gives such suggestion, or how the light of nature alone could inspire such faith; or how, if such faith has had no real answer to sustain it, it could have lived on in undiminished strength through all the generations of men.

Direct manifestations of God to man, from the beginning of his career upon the earth, surely were necesssary to establish this faith. Spiritual fellowship with him, and the conscious answer of his Spir-

it in the hearts and experiences of his trusting children, could alone keep such faith alive. In the religious history of the world facts confront us which are inexplicable unless God has, indeed, at sundry times and in divers manners revealed himself to the children of men.

CHAPTER VII.

Miracles.

Revelation assumes miracles. If we have any knowledge of God or his will besides that which has come to us from the study of nature, it could only have come to us through supernatural channels. Any direct revelation of God to men must be attested by miracle. Such a revelation would be a miracle in itself.

The term supernatural defines itself—that which is above nature, which nature by her laws cannot produce.

In the material world we observe that all things have their essential or constituent properties, and that these properties have their affinities and mutual action upon each other. Phenomena are constantly appearing within the realm of the material which, however startling, we never think to attribute to any cause but the forces which are always operating upon matter and which we denominate laws of nature. No one would think even of the explosion of a planet as a miracle.

We allow also certain results to the operations of man upon nature. If we should see roses, apple blossoms, and cherry blossoms all growing upon the same stock, we would agree that nature alone could never produce this; but, being within the power of an intelligent agent, operating upon

nature, we would still refuse to classify such a work as miraculous. But in this illustration we have taken a step toward the true idea of miracles, which are effects superinduced upon nature by an intelligent Agent, who manifests superiority to and dominion over nature in what he does.

We agree that nothing shall be reckoned to be a miracle which does not manifest a purpose, asserting the operations of an intelligent Agent, and such an Agent as is superior to all created intelligences, so far as we can know or conceive. If man appear as a worker of miracles, he must be reckoned not as the possessor of the power, but the medium only through which the divine power is revealed.

Only a power operating upon nature from beyond nature's sphere can produce the supernatural. If, under existing laws, and by virtue of forces acting in the material world, though hidden from us, a planet broken from its orbit should drive within proximity to the earth, until the heaviest objects on the surface of this globe floated in the air like feathers, this would not be supernatural or miraculous.

But we are now met with the question, "How shall the supernatural or miraculous be known?" One says, "The word 'supernatural' has no right to a place in our vocabulary; for until we know all the natural, how can we say of anything that it is supernatural?" We answer that we need not know all the natural, through all the ranges of the uni-

verse, in order to be assured of the supernatural in things which do lie within the sphere of our observation and knowledge. The objection is presented in specious form, but is not true in its suggestions. It is not necessary to know all that nature can do before we can know anything which it cannot do. We do not need to comprehend the whole system of the universe to know that a rod of wood, instantly changed to a serpent, would be a thing supernatural, or that a really dead man, quickened into life at a word, would reveal supernatural power. If, turning from all material objects, laws, and forces, man may direct his thought and prayer to the unseen, as to an omnipotent being, and a spiritual agent, and know that he has not prayed and trusted in vain, he may well believe that he has come into touch with the Ruler of the world, from whom he has received direct manifestations.

Although a miracle must be something above and beyond anything which the regular operation of nature's laws can produce, or which man's intelligence may superimpose upon nature's work, yet we cannot accept that definition of a miracle which represents it as a suspension of nature's laws. A miracle is not the effect of natural law, neither is it contrary to natural law, but a thing superinduced upon natural law, showing a power superior to it. So far from natural law ceasing to operate in the case of a miracle, the assumption that it does operate steadily and in full force is the only basis

upon which the miraculous can be predicated at all.

We must think of nature as a unit. Any suspension of a law of nature would affect nature in her whole domain. If it were known that any law of nature ceased at any time to act, so far from suggesting intelligent interposition, it would suggest a defect in creation, and be only an argument against an intelligent Creator. For, no matter whether what we call nature's laws be regarded as inherent in matter or the constant operation of creative and controlling power over it, the steady action of these forces is still a necessary condition to the harmony of the universe.

If I take a stone from my path and toss it upward, it then assumes a motion directly contrary to that which the attraction of gravitation would give it. But is the law of gravitation, therefore, suspended as to this stone? That force is still acting; and the fact that it is acting alone gives significance to this upward movement, demanding for its explanation the intervention of another force, counteracting, for the time, the result which gravitation alone would produce. Let it now be assumed that gravitation itself may cease to act at times upon stones, so that any stone is liable, for no other reason, to leave its fellows clinging to the earth and float away like a bubble, then there would be no basis upon which to predicate the interposition of any power in the matter. Our thoughts would no longer be led beyond nature

in such a case; only nature itself would seem unsettled and uncontrolled.

Just as our confidence in the law of gravitation, that it acts as strongly on the upward moving as upon the falling stone, forces the mind to consider an agent who has produced the upward motion, so our confidence that nature's laws remain in force furnishes us the standards by which miracles are tested.

The machinery of the world is such that the great Architect can directly interpose in its workings without break of its parts or suspension of the forces he has set to control it. The illustration of the watch is in point. The maker of the watch, having completed its machinery, adjusted its parts to their proper places and functions, and fixed the mainspring as its driving force, assumes that the watch will now do its work without his interference. But, erelong, he discovers that this watch is too fast. He takes it in his hand, takes a key and turns it back to the proper time, and slightly moves the regulator. There is now in this watch a result produced, which did not come from the watch itself, yet no law of the watch has either been violated or suspended. A result has been produced which only an intelligent agent, who understood the watch, could bring about. We may say, indeed, that here is a result which required alike the watch and the maker of the watch. The watch was made capable of being used thus. Such was the maker's original plan; and he found it a

pliant agent in his hand to accomplish his purpose. It presented to its maker nothing antagonistic to his power. Let us believe that such is the relation of the universe to its Creator.

But as the watch, in its regular and daily movement, gives fuller expression of the maker's thought and purpose than is given by any momentary interposition of his hand, so we believe that a wise man will be especially attentive to the study of God in nature, and that the especial revelations God has given us are, in part at least, to assert his direct connection with that source of knowledge, that we may attribute nothing to nature apart from himself.

This last thought suggests to us methods by which God may reveal himself. Natural agencies may be employed to give supernatural revelations, asserting the immediate operation and will of the Creator. The triumphs of mind over matter are constantly striking the world with new surprises. Man accomplishes results to-day which no former age could have believed possible. But these triumphs of mind are exhibited through natural agencies. The splendors of architecture, the armaments of war, the new methods of locomotion and communication of thought are examples of this. By the machinery which nature provides for his adjustment man flashes his thought in an instant across the seas. He gathers into his mind, hourly, the great events which hourly happen throughout the world. Ought we, then, to stag-

ger at the thought that He who created all the universe has ways, belonging to his power alone, to send his messages and thoughts to us? And if, in the ages to come, and in the developments of knowledge, it shall be seen that He who created the machinery of nature used that machinery for accomplishing his purpose, proving himself a scientist beyond our dreaming, now, such disclosures will not in the least remove the supernatural from our faith. Beyond any natural agency within the knowledge of created beings, miracles of wisdom and power would still stand to reveal the direct operations of the Ruler of all things.

Miracles often lie in the mere relations of circumstances or events, which in themselves are in no way supernatural or even uncommon. Murrain in the cattle would hardly have been a surprise to the Egyptians had it not broken forth at the command of Moses. Swarms of locusts and of flies were familiar pests to the Egyptians; but when these things came at the bidding of one who declared himself the agent of the Almighty, there was reason to believe that God directly interposed to send them, and that Moses's claim was true. The supernatural element in the plagues of Egypt was clear enough when the circumstances and conditions under which they came were taken into account.

Most writers upon Christian evidences have given considerable space to the refutation of David Hume's argument against the credibility of mira-

cles; but it is not now seriously urged, even by skeptics, its fallacy having been fully exposed. We shall therefore give it but brief notice.

Availing himself of the false definition of miracles, too often allowed, Mr. Hume insists that such is our confidence in the uniform operations of nature's laws that no weight of human testimony to the contrary could produce conviction and establish a rational and sincere belief that a miracle had been performed. Let the testimony of witnesses be extended to any number of men, deemed competent and credible, and let their testimony harmonize, without possibility of collusion, until the evidence upon that side is made as strong as human testimony can be, and one is ready to say, "It is impossible to doubt." Yet, turning now to the laws of nature, which to our observation act uniformly and ceaselessly, we must have as much confidence in such operation as we can possibly have in any human testimony; so, Mr. Hume insists, that real conviction under such circumstances cannot take place. This argument is clearly fallacious, and a manifest begging of the question. There is nothing set against the testimony of the witnesses in the case assumed, except the foregone conviction or assumption that miracles are impossible, and hence not to be believed. Such an assumption would ever invalidate any experience, and cause such as might witness miracles to refuse to believe them. The assumption that miracles are unbelievable is the ground from which Mr.

Hume argues. But no one can admit the existence of a God and then deny the possibility of his performing miracles. Nor can any one acknowledge the possibility of miracles and logically deny the possibility of belief in miracles. But as to Mr. Hume's argument that belief in miracles cannot be established on human testimony, we may simply answer that, as a matter of fact, it has been so established, and that, too, in the minds of the best thinkers of the present and many previous generations.

But Hume's definition of a miracle is incorrect, as we have previously shown. We will agree that the laws of nature are never suspended or set aside, and yet find place for faith in miracles. As we have shown, it is just this idea, that nature's laws never cease to act, that enables us to form a correct idea of miracles and the standards by which miracles are tested. In results superinduced upon nature's laws while they are still in play, we see the very Author of nature revealing himself in his supreme creative power. Such manifestations teach us to look beyond nature, that the thought of God, Creator and Ruler of all things, may be made central in our conception of nature, and that, ruled by such a thought, we may read nature aright. Faith reaches beyond the visible and material. Yet the instinct of faith has been answered and reassured by ocular testimony of the direct interposition of God's hand in the phenomena of the material world. Thus has been furnished man the

key to interpret nature itself, as the work of an intelligent Creator, who forever watches over his work and directs it to some intelligent consummation and result. Nor can man, standing at the summit of this order of things, which he beholds, doubt that the supreme purpose of the Creator is to be realized in himself—a being capable of knowing God and communing with him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Inspiration and Revelation.

We have seen that it is reasonable to believe that God would make known his will to men. The Bible claims to be a revelation of his will for our guidance. What arguments are presented to sustain this claim? What arguments must reason demand?

Before attempting to answer these questions directly, I deem it needful to clear away certain rubbish with which the subject has been encumbered. Not unfrequently have the defenders of the divine authority of the Bible gone into the contest with unbelief loaded down with useless burdens. Mere trumpery has been defended as if it were essential truth, and Christian apologists have been driven back, at some points, because they attempted to prove too much. This observation applies, especially, to certain doctrines respecting inspiration. The term "inspiration" means "in-breathing," and is employed by theologians to express a direct influence of the Divine Spirit in the production of the sacred writings, so as to invest them with infallibility and divine authority, as a revelation of God's will concerning the conduct of men.

Such a view of the Old Testament Scriptures was rigorously held by the Jews, and is expressed

in Paul's second letter to Timothy when he says, as translated in the Revised Version: "From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God (θεόπνευστος—"God inbreathed"), is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

In 2 Peter i. 21, we read: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Such claims are set up for the Old Testament Scriptures. The claim of continuous inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament writings is grounded, chiefly, upon Jesus' official promise to his apostles as his witnesses chosen to give his life and teaching to succeeding generations: "The Holy Ghost *shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said unto you; he shall guide you into all truth; he shall show you things to come.*" (John xiv. 26; xvi. 13.)

I have quoted these passages only to show that the claim of inspiration is authorized by the Scriptures themselves—for such portions, at least, as have right to a place in the sacred canon. Our inquiry is as to what such a claim may imply, and in what manner it is to be interpreted in its application to various scriptures. In other words, we inquire into the manner and extent of inspiration.

Some, moved with a zeal to exalt the sacredness of the Scriptures, have conceived of their writers as little else than machines, operated and controlled by the Holy Ghost, in conveying God's messages to the world. In their view, all the thought contained in the Bible, and the language in which it is expressed, must be regarded as proceeding, directly, from God—the thought inbreathed, the words dictated by the Holy Ghost. To this view a thoughtful man will object that much of the Bible is purely historic, recording events which occurred within the obsevation of men, and which did not pertain to any sphere of divine or supernatural knowledge. For illustration: If it be granted that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, may we not ask where is the need in much that he wrote of the inspiration here assumed? Is not the record, for the most part, a history which was well known to his people at the time, and a record of his own acts and teachings? Did the Holy Ghost need to make Moses acquainted with most of the facts which he relates? What sort of inspiration did he need to tell us of the Egyptian bondage, the oppression of the Pharaohs, and the deliverance of the Israelites? What sort of inspiration did he need to tell us of his solitary life in Midian, and how he married Jethro's daughter and kept Jethro's sheep, or of the journey in the wilderness and its events? Certainly not any direct communication to him by the Holy Ghost of the facts which he recorded was necessary for this.

The foregoing suggestions will apply over a wide field. The Bible history is found to be, by all possible tests, wonderfully accurate. Suppose we accept it as absolutely inerrant. To secure that inerrancy, could the direct influence of the Holy Ghost be required at all points? Might we not regard men as competent witnesses of what they themselves saw and said and did, without any divine illumination upon such matters?

A necessary part of the theory of inspiration under discussion is that which respects the language used by the sacred writers. It is insisted that in the matter of utterance, whether in speaking or writing, inspired men were passive, and the language which they used was that of the Holy Ghost speaking through them; or, to state the matter somewhat differently, that there was a guidance of the Holy Ghost in every word, so that always the fittest word was chosen.

The objector says in answer to such a view: "The Holy Ghost has no vocabulary or language of his own. The writers of the Bible used the language of their times, less perfect and adequate to the exact expression of thought than the better developed languages of to-day. Besides, the marks of individual authorship in style are as clear in the sacred books as in modern compositions. Each writer was not merely limited to the language of his day, but to his more or less extensive knowledge of it. The same things are related by different writers of the Scriptures in different language. Can we, then,

believe that there is such importance in the precise words employed? But if this claim of verbal inspiration were granted for the original documents, what would it avail? The original documents have long since ceased to exist. In the ancient manuscript copies many variations are found, and every translator, who gives us the meaning of these manuscripts in the living languages of our time, gives that meaning in different words. What becomes, then, of verbal inspiration?" Such objections are valid in spite of all the efforts which have been made to answer them.

Along with an extreme view of verbal inspiration goes an extreme view of the inerrancy of the Bible record. If every thought which the book contains, and every word in which that thought was uttered, came directly from God, and is to be taken, in the severest sense, as his thought and speech, then there could be no possible error in the record in any of its statements or allusions. To convict it of any error in references to history, geography, or current facts, would invalidate the claim of inspiration and overturn faith in the divine authority of the Bible. But, in truth, the absolute inerrancy of the Bible in all its statements and allusions cannot be established. Sometimes we find a positive discrepancy in statements, as when we read in 2 Kings viii. 26, "Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign"; and in 2 Chronicles xxii. 2, "Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign." Some-

times we find an error of reference, as in Matthew xxvii. 9, where a prophecy is attributed to Jeremiah which is not found at all in Jeremiah, but belongs to Zechariah.

We may remark here that these differences were known to the early Church fathers, and the fact that they remain in the text, when they might have been eliminated with the stroke of a pen, is, to thoughtful Bible students, a proof of the fidelity with which original documents have been preserved.

Again, it is important to remember that much that the Bible teaches is presented to us in allegorical style, or in dramatic form, so that no severely literal construction can be placed upon its language. Few interpreters of the Bible to-day will insist upon six literal days of creation, yet, for nearly two thousand years, such was the only view which was regarded as consistent with the record. Now we hold that Genesis only puts the creation in dramatic form and order in its six days, and bears no testimony as to literal time. We are also satisfied that the value of the sacred record is in no way impaired by the facts of geology.

If it should be concluded that in the account which Moses gives us of the rivers of Eden we have the ideas of the current geography of his times, instead of a strictly accurate account of these rivers, could any thoughtful man, on that ground, have less regard for the spiritual doctrines and moral duties which Moses taught the world? If, in the

Gospel, when John says of the pool of Bethesda, "An angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the waters, whosoever then first after the troubling of the waters stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had," he relates current tradition instead of actual fact, will any one discredit John's Gospel for that?

There is a wide discrepancy between the Hebrew and the Septuagint Scriptures in regard to the time which elapsed from Adam to the flood, and from the flood to the call of Abraham. Is the Septuagint a correct translation, or was the Hebrew original changed after that translation was made? Is this question of dates a matter of importance in a record of God's dealing with men? If we cannot reliably fix the date of the birth of Enoch or the time of the flood, shall we trouble ourselves about it, when we cannot even date the birth of our Saviour?

There are not a few persons to-day, among those who have not kept pace with the current discussion of these subjects, who hold that severe view of inspriration which we have been considering, and that idea of the inerrancy of Scripture which is its necessary corollary, and so, have left to themselves only the alternative of believing that which is unreasonable, and which facts contradict, or surrendering, altogether, their faith in the Bible, as the medium of divine revelation to men. Yet, the fact that their faith is so assailable is due only to an attempt, upon the part of theologians, to maintain, in regard to the Bible, theories which they have

no need to maintain—bare assumptions, which the Church has, in a measure, sanctioned as sound doctrine, and by her effort to defend them burdened the defenders of revelation with useless *impedimenta.*

A distinction between inspiration and divine revelation, which is very important, is not always kept in view, and a fair statement of it may be helpful at this point.

Let us, then, recur to the assumed objections in regard to the inspiration of the books of Moses. If one should assert that, for the most part, the Pentateuch is but a history which an eye-witness and an actor in the scenes could have written, and needed no inspiration to write, would that view diminish the value of these books as a revelation of divine truth? Put the record upon the ground of any other history, and say that, written by Moses or some one else, it relates what did actually occur, and it becomes at once a revelation of God at every step. The Israelites are a chosen people of God. God watches over them, and his special care of them makes their unique history. Moses himself is marvelously preserved and trained to be their deliverer from Egyptian bondage. God appears to him at Horeb and commissions him for that work. Moses performs miracles in the land of Egypt. Many signs from heaven rebuke and scourge Pharaoh. The Passover is instituted with suggestion of the world's redemption. The Red Sea is crossed by the Israelites dry-shod. It swal-

lows Pharaoh's army. Manna from heaven saves the chosen people from perishing in the wilderness. Moses receives the law upon Sinai. And so the history runs—a history of God's people and of God's dealings with his people, for their instruction, and for establishing for all the world the doctrines and duties of true religion. Now let it only be granted that this history tells the truth, and God is in every line of it. It is a revelation of God to men. That is its claim. It cannot be accepted as true history and not accepted as a divine revelation. If Moses is regarded simply as recording truths with which he became acquainted in personal experience—a thing he was surely competent to do, and which he claimed to do—is it any more to be questioned that his writings give us a revelation of God, and that he was a chosen instrument of God for that purpose?

An important fact, and one that we shall have need more fully to consider in the course of this treatise, is, that the revelations of God to our race are in the great facts of history. Those who passed through the same history with Moses saw God revealed in signs and wonders—"by a high hand and an outstretched arm." The record is but the history of that revelation. The history was for after generations. It preserves and transmits revealed truths. It was not needed for those who personally saw and heard the things recorded. "The things written aforetime were written for our instruction."

The revelation of God, which must confound unbelief, is a revelation of facts, imbedded in the history of our race, and of which the Bible is chiefly a record.

Whether we believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch in its present form (it is certain that he did not write all of it), or receive it as a redaction of early Hebrew history by a later writer, accepting only the facts of that history which a just historic criticism compels us to admit, Moses stands before us as the most august and sacred and influential person who has ever appeared in the world, with one single exception—that exception the Man of Nazareth. It is clear that the Pentateuch must be accepted as the history of a special divine revelation by virtue of the facts which it records.

In Moses the people justly recognized God's authority and mouthpiece. If much of the detail is commonplace—such as the length and fitting of the boards of the tabernacle, its covering of badger skins, or the order of march or encampment—still the hand of God appears over all, visible as the flame and darkness on Mount Sinai, or the pillar of fire that guarded Israel's night encampment and led, as a bright cloud, their daily march.

Casting aside ideas of inspiration which are not warranted by the record, and which only create difficulties in the way of intelligent faith, we have still to recognize Moses, upon the irrefutable facts of history, as one who received revelations of the

divine truth and will in, the most wonderful objective expressions and assertions, and who had subjective guidance in all that way in which he led and taught the chosen people, respecting the will of Jehovah.

We are also compelled to believe that, although to the people of Moses's time, the revelation was ocular and audible, and might long have been preserved by tradition, the purpose of God designed it for all the ages, and so the record of it is to be regarded as equally a matter of the divine providence as the original revelation in the events recorded. These views apply, not to the Pentateuch alone, but to the whole historic record of the Bible.

There is no single form or measure of inspiration which can apply to the entire Bible. In the prophecies, where events are foretold, which man by no means could foresee, direct inspiration of the thought recorded must be granted. Many of these revelations of the future were in visions, in which great national changes were known, by the prophets, to be foreshadowed, not definitely, as to detail or time. Events which should mark the course of the world's history appeared in panoramic visions to the seers—visions which they described, while they were, to themselves, in a measure, closed and sealed, to be understood perfectly only in the light of their fulfillment.

Again, we find in the Bible prayers, exhortations, hymns of praise, where inspiration could scarcely

be other than the promptings of the Divine Spirit in devout souls—a manifestation of that Spirit which, by its holy aspirations, we know to be of God and not of man's own nature.

There are theories respecting the method of inspiration which it is not needful to discuss here. It will aid us to form at least a consistent view of the extent of inspiration to ask, What is its purpose and aim?

Paul speaks of *God-inbreathed* Scripture, as being profitable for "teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

Let us say, then, that the purpose of the Bible is to furnish us all needful knowledge of our duty before God. Such revelation of duty appears in the doctrines which the Bible teaches of God, and man's relation to him, and to an eternal future. It appears in moral laws and precepts, and in the history of human lives, wherein are set forth the operations of grace and truth in individual souls, and God's dealing, in favor or displeasure, with men, according to their conduct. Especially is this purpose of revelation, and the full light of the revelation itself, seen in Jesus Christ, who completes, in his life and teaching and death, the manifestation of God to the world.

Is it not enough that we hold the Bible to be a perfect and sufficient guide in morals? Is it a book to be pressed into service in controversies of

science? Because we hold its writers as infallible authority in the matter of duty to God, shall we invest every incident which the record connects with their teaching as a divine utterance? If a man is inspired to teach us our duty before God, must we assume that he is, therefore, inspired, and made infallible in history and geography and science? Is such an assumption demanded? Is it even logical? We prefer not to go into the contest with unbelief loaded with such assumptions as these. They are in no way essential to the one claim that the doctrinal and moral teaching of the Bible is a revelation to us of divine truth, and the perfect will of God, "that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

According to Paul's definition, we reckon the whole Bible to be inspired. In what way? While the various portions of the Bible suggest varying forms and degrees of divine enlightenment and guidance, there is one character of inspiration which covers the whole record. It is that faith in God and communion with him which put the sacred writers *en rapport* with the divine will, and enabled them to behold all things in a divine light; so that events of history and the experiences of personal life are continually set in a spiritual relation in their records. In the details of current history they are far removed from the sphere of the profane historian. It is the moving of God's hand which they see; it is the revelation of God's will about which they are concerned. The sacred writers are, while

recording events which other historians have also recorded, interpreters to the world of the true significance of such events. God and God's will concerning men are thoughts ever dominant in their minds, and in relation to which all things take their places and teach their lessons. Here is continual divine influence, manifest in the record, and claimed by the writers, whose one mission was to teach the people in the ways of obedience to God. Under this broad definition of inspiration, which we conceive applies to all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament various other forms and degrees of inspiration are manifest in different portions of the record.

This view of divine inspiration is sufficient, and will not trammel us in the freest investigation of the claims of the Bible. It throws us upon the facts, giving place always for the recognition of God's hand, both in making the facts and securing to the world a true record of the same. The supreme question is, Does the Bible give us a record of historic truths and of doctrines and moral teachings which evidence a direct revelation of God to the world?

CHAPTER IX.

The Bible—The Records and the Writers.

The Bible, as it is known to the common English reader of to-day, has come down to us through many vicissitudes. The Old Testament was produced at various times and by various writers from the time of Moses, assumed to have been about B.C. 1490, till the time of the prophet Malachi, B.C. 397. As to the sources of these records, and their arrangement in the present form of the Old Testament canon, we shall speak hereafter.

The Old Testament was translated into Greek in the city of Alexandria, in Egypt, by order of the King of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, who took this means of furthering a scheme to make the Greek language the universal language of the people he ruled. It is agreed that this translation was begun about B.C. 285. It is called the "Septuagint" version (the version of the seventy) because tradition reports that seventy men were employed upon the work. This Septuagint version was the volume of sacred Scripture used by the Jews in Jesus' time, and from which Jesus and his apostles took the texts which they quoted. This version continued to be used by the Christian Church for many centuries. It is still the basis of the Scriptures used by the Greek Church; and the Douay Bible of the Roman Catholic Church was translated from the

Vulgate of St. Jerome, whose translation was from the Septuagint.

The rise of the Christian Church had the effect upon the Jews of turning them, with new devotion, to the study of their ancient language, and aroused them to effort to perfect the canon of their Scriptures in the Hebrew text. They rejected the Septuagint because it was the version accepted by the Christians. Two prominent schools of Jewish scholars, known as Massoretes, one at Tiberias, in Galilee, the other at Sora, in the Euphrates Valley, were devoted to the work of collecting and verifying their Scriptures. The work was begun in the sixth century, and was not completed till the twelfth. The Septuagint and this Hebrew Bible differ widely in the chronology of the early ages, but as respects the record of facts, teachings, history, law, prophecy, they are virtually one. The labor whch the Massoretes bestowed on the work of establishing the Hebrew text of their Scriptures was a great benefit to the Christian world, as its chief effect was to establish, substantially, the authority of the Scriptures which the Christians had accepted and used, whether from the Greek or Hebrew reading. The English Bible—King James's version—was translated from the Massoretic Hebrew of the Old Testament and the original Greek of the New.

In our inquiry as to the sources of the sacred Scriptures and the authenticity of the records, we shall allow to historic criticism due importance

within its proper sphere. A divine revelation should stand all the tests of legitimate inquiry, and should come forth more clear, better established, and better understood because of such investigation. We know not upon what ground the Bible can be received as the word of God, except that all the evidences which can be brought to bear upon the question make any other conclusion unreasonable. We agree, also, that this question of the divine source and authority of the Bible cannot be closed by the dictum of any man, nor by the Church, but is to be reckoned, always, an open question to any one who would examine it anew.

If, in the progress of knowledge, new facts are obtained and better canons of criticism are established, it is not too much to ask the Christian to subject his faith to the test of newly discovered truths. This, Christians have often been required to do, and have done it to their profit. The revelations of science have, again and again, broken down the dogmatism of men who were high in authority in the Church, but whose confident expositions were only ignorant perversions of the sacred book. Under a decree of Pope Urbain XIII., signed by Cardinals Felia, Guido, Desiderio, Antonio, Belligero, and Fabricius, the astronomer Galileo, to escape death, did, June 22, 1663, fall on his knees and declare, "I abjure, curse, and detest the error and heresy of the motion of the earth around the sun." But the earth moved on, and astronomical science moved on, "and the thoughts

of men were widened by the process of the suns," and Galileo's view now controls the world. Meantime, faith in the Bible has also grown stronger, and advanced apace.

The good Mr. Cecil said: "When one awakens me from sleep, with the cry that my house is about to fall on my head, I rise from my bed, light my lamp, go down into my cellar, examine the pillars and arches and columns that support my dwelling, and if these are firm and unshaken, I return to my room, blow out my candle, and lie down to sleep. So, when the clamors of infidelity arouse me with some new alarm, I reëxamine my faith at that point, and being confirmed, dismiss my fears."

But as respects historic criticism it must not be allowed to begin its investigations of the Bible history by assumptions which beg the whole question of direct revelations from God. It may eliminate from profane history the story of Romulus and Remus, suckled by the wolf, and the story of Hercules and his wonderful deeds, on the mere ground of the unreasonableness of these things. But, to dispose of the passage of the Red Sea and other miracles of the Bible record in such a way, is to refuse to the Bible that investigation which the very claim of the record, as a means of divine instruction to man, legitimately demands. Even the story of Hercules would have to be credited if the experiences of men in after time and the developments of history demanded such belief. The miracles of the Bible have their legitimate tests

in the purpose for which they were performed and the results which have followed from belief in them. The continuous evidence that they did occur has come down to us.

It is in order to consider the Bible historically—to inquire concerning the authors who delivered its teachings to the world, the agents by whom those teachings were written down, and the circumstances which affected the record. We need also to note in what estimation the Jews held these Scriptures, and in what manner they have been preserved and transmitted to us.

A wide field is here opened before us, to which we can give but a hasty view—a view that will be profitable, mainly, in protecting us from the spirit of dogmatism in further investigations, by showing how little can be positively known respecting the authorship of the Jewish Scriptures, and by directing our studies to issues of far more importance than any question that authorship involves.

The word "bible," which is, in the English language, as in the Latin of the middle ages, used as a singular noun, is plural in its original Greek form, τα βιβλία, and means "the books." This title is given to a compilation of many separate books, produced by different authors, in ages widely separated.

The Bible is divided into two general sections, denominated, respectively, the Old and the New Testament; the Old Testament embracing all those Scriptures which are held sacred by the Jews,

also accepted by the Christians, and the New Testament, the history and teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles, accepted by Christians only, as a further development of the religion which began to be revealed in the Jewish Scriptures, consummating its manifest scheme and fulfilling its prophecies.

The word "testament," from the Latin *testamentum*, is a somewhat imperfect rendering of the Greek διαθηχη, "covenant." The central idea set forth in each of the two general sections of the Bible is that of a covenant relation established between God and a people who are, in a peculiar sense, his chosen. The Jews claimed to be a people whom the one true God, Jehovah, had chosen from among the nations, to be the recipients of an especial revelation of divine truth, and the subjects of an especial providential guidance. A people with whom God had established a covenant.

Jesus Christ also made prominent the covenant relation between God and his people. He set the conditions of obtaining and maintaining the divine favor upon higher spiritual ground than was manifest in the Old Testament. He represented himself as the way to God, the Mediator between God and men. By faith in him and obedience to his teachings, the fellowship of God the Father is secured. To reject him is to be rejected of the Father. Thus Jesus claimed to unite his followers to God by a new covenant, sealed by his blood. Christians call the revelation through Christ the New Testament,

although it is but the consummation of the conditions and promises of the old covenant, and shows us only the perfecting of it.

In our English Bible the Old Testament is divided into thirty-nine books and the New Testament into twenty-seven. The history of the Old Testament canon will show that its books, as they now stand, do not represent different authors in every case, nor different books by the same author. Any arrangement of these books with which history makes us acquainted will be found to be arbitrary—the work of redactors, and not any arrangement of original authors. The Jews still divide their Scriptures into twenty-four books, and at an earlier period they made but twenty-two books. Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles are not divided in the Hebrew collection. Ruth is embraced in the book of Judges, and Lamentations in Jeremiah, and the twelve minor prophets in one book. An earlier arrangement united Ezra and Nehemiah and put Job with the minor prophets.

We know but little, certainly, as to who were the authors of most of these books, or when they were written. Except in the case of the prophets, who refer often to themselves by name as the authors of their predictions and teachings, the Hebrew records are anonymous. No one wrote a book then as now—a complete volume with the author's name—nor did compilers and copyists indicate the sources of their information. The writings which came originally from many different authors were

likely, in course of time, to become united in one book. Even that which was attributed to certain authors may not have been written by them, but may have come from them orally, and have been preserved by oral teaching through many generations before it was written at all. Much which the Old Testament contains was probably thus taught the people long before it was committed to writing. So long as inspired men taught the people by divine authority, the idea of collecting all their deliverances for the guidance of the people could hardly have occurred. The living voice, and the divine authority in it, took the place of everything, save that, always, Moses was supreme, and the law of Moses imperative, and the highest function of inspired teachers was to bring the people to regard the Lord Jehovah and the laws he had given through Moses.

But when the voice of prophecy ceased, as it did with Malachi, about four hundred years before Christ, and the people became aware that no longer any living divinely inspired teacher appeared to guide them, then, the authority of the priest became preëminent, as expounders of the truth, as holy men of old, who were moved by the Holy Ghost, had uttered it. Then all the utterances of inspired men became a sacred treasure, as representing the full depositum of divine revelation to the people. Out of these conditions grew the collecting of the sacred Scriptures and the forming of the sacred canon. This was not

a work to be done all at once. The reader will readily suppose that much time would elapse before all the Scriptures were collected and all questions settled respecting their right to be recognized as inspired.

It was only in reference to a small portion of the Scriptures, however, that doubt as to divine authority was ever entertained; and, although the authority of the Jewish Church was never formally and finally expressed on the subject, until the Synod of Jamnia, held in the year A.D. 90, yet, centuries before this time the entire collection of writings, now embraced in the Old Testament canon, was held as sacred Scripture by most of the Jews.

In the prologue to the book of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus, the son of Sirach, the son of Jesus, represents himself as taking up and completing a work begun by his grandfather, of whom he says: "My grandfather, Jesus, when he had much given himself to the reading of the law and the prophets and other books of our fathers, and had gotten therein good judgment, was drawn on also himself to write something pertaining to learning and wisdom."

Here mention is made of the three divisions of the Scriptures—the Law, the Prophets, and the Sacred Writings; and, as the author, who wrote about 200 B.C., refers to his grandfather as a devout student of these Scriptures, we have excellent reason for believing that, whatever controversies afterwards arose concerning some of the books, the collection was never changed, from a

period before the birth of Christ two hundred and fifty years or more.

The Septuagint version of the Old Testament is a Greek translation which began to be made, as formerly stated, as early as 285 B.C. This translation the Jews, in our Saviour's time, accepted and used, and it was from it that Jesus and his disciples quoted in their references to the Holy Scriptures. But this Greek translation contains substantially all the Old Testament canon.

Thus it appears that although we cannot definitely determine when the latest record of the Old Testament was made, or at what time all the books were first collected, yet we may believe that all was done within a century after Malachi or as early as three hundred years before Christ.

As to the care with which the Scriptures, when once accepted, were guarded against change, there is no question.

The oldest list of the sacred books of the Jews, of which we have any knowledge, is that furnished by Josephus about A.D. 85. In regard to these Scriptures Josephus uses this language: "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine. Of them five belong to Moses. But as to the time from the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, the prophets who were after Moses wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining

four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true our history has been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but has not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our fathers, because there has not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it has been natural to all Jews immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them."

The lyrical books to which Josephus refers in the foregoing are Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In the thirteen prophets of which he speaks, Job is included.

Notwithstanding the very positive deliverance of Josephus on the subject, history shows us that in his own time there was a persistent contest between the rabbis of the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel whether certain books should not be excluded from the canon. The school of Shammai would have rejected Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. The synod of Jamnia, held A.D. 90, being controlled by the Hillelites, received both of these books, and declared them canonical, but they had been generally so regarded

long before. This action we may regard as the authoritative closing of the Old Testament canon so far as the Jewish Church was concerned.

The Jews divided their Scriptures into three sections according to their estimation of their dignity and importance. These sections were denominated "The Law," "The Prophets," and "The Sacred Writings." The first division included the first five books of the Bible attributed to Moses; the second division embraced Joshua, Judges (with Ruth), Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve minor prophets. The Sacred Writings were Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, Daniel, Chronicles, Ezra (with Nehemiah), and Esther. The Jews do not give Daniel the rank of a prophet, although they acknowledge him to have been a man inspired of God, and whose writings contain important prophecies.

The question of authorship, as it applies to these three sections of Scripture, is important chiefly in regard to the first—the books attributed to Moses, and which clearly lay the basis for all the rest.

"The Sacred Writings," being given us to illustrate moral truths and enforce doctrines and duties accepted, have, in themselves, their claim to regard. The book of Psalms is a collection of hymns from various authors extending from Moses to Malachi, a period of one thousand years. David holds the chief place among these, and the whole book is often spoken of as "The Psalms of David." We are no more concerned to know who wrote each

separate psalm than to know who wrote each separate hymn in the Methodist hymn book.

The Proverbs are also from many authors—a collection of wise sayings, in common use among the people, and which had come from many wise men in course of time. Among these Solomon is given the chief place.

Ecclesiastes is a sermon on the vanities of life, which takes the career of Solomon for its text, and puts its speeches in the mouth of Solomon. But whether Solomon or some one else was the author is not known. None of the Bible scholars or critics have been assured of the authorship of the book of Job, or of Esther, or the Songs of Solomon, or the book of Dniel. The books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah were written, no doubt, by Ezra. But Chronicles is a compilation from state papers and other documents, many of which are referred to by the writer.

As respects the prophets, they speak of themselves as the authors of the utterances attributed to them. No serious doubt has been entertained that the names affixed to the prophetic books represent their real authors. But it cannot, with so much confidence, be claimed that these prophets wrote out personally all the prophecies which they uttered, or that there were not other prophecies of theirs also, which never were written at all. Jeremiah testifies that it was not until he had prophesied for twenty-three years that the Lord commanded him to write what he had spoken. Com-

pare Jeremiah xxv. 1-3 and xxxvi. 1. Some modern critics have claimed, with considerable show of evidence, that the work of two prophets is included under the single title of Isaiah, and they make the division between the words of Isaiah, the son of Amos, and their Deuteros Isaiah, who is assumed to have written during the captivity, at the end of chapter xxxix. A different style, a different point of view, and the absence of the name of Isaiah from the section beginning with chapter l. and extending to the close of the book, are significant facts.

As the discussion about authorship has little importance, save as it refers to the Pentateuch, we give a little space to the consideration of this subject.

It is agreed that the Pentateuch, in its present form, came from the hand of Ezra, the scribe, who arranged the order of the sacred books and wrote them out in the modern Hebrew characters, when the Jews had returned from the Babylonish captivity. Ezra was, according to the record, a learned scribe who read to the people the Law of Moses, the Book of the Covenant, as stated in the eighth and ninth chapters of Nehemiah. He, with the assistance of Nehemiah, brought the people to ratify the covenant, and set up the ritual of the temple service. But it is absurd to suppose that Ezra was, in any sense, the author of the Pentateuch. He wrote it out in the Chaldee letters. He probably substituted, in places, modern names for such as had become obsolete, and interpolated some explana-

tory passages, but it is unreasonable to believe that he brought the people to accept as the teachings of Moses, and as an authority through all their past history, laws which were not known to their past history at all. It is impossible to consider the course of Ezra, weakening his following at Jerusalem, driving from him influential men, and imposing upon the people who adhered to him the most severe laws, and upon himself the heaviest burdens, to accomplish a selfish scheme. Nothing but the highest sense of responsibility before God could explain Ezra's course. Nor could anything but the recognition of Moses as supreme authority explain the conduct of the people.

Moses was an authority which the Jews never questioned. His authority had been confessed through the whole life of their nation. Their entire history is in testimony that they held their moral law, their statutes and ordinances, and their religous ceremonies from Moses. And only with the faith that these were revelations of the will of God could Ezra have accomplished the work he did in bringing the people to confess their sins and enter into covenant with Jehovah at the reading of the law, to keep the law of Moses.

We need not even insist that the contents of the Pentateuch had ever been fully written out before Ezra's time. Much of the teaching was oral in the earlier periods of Jewish history, and especially so in religion, for the institutions for perpetuating the

true religion provided for its teaching by word of mouth from the priests and prophets. We have among us, to-day, societies which suggest how perfectly and uniformly lessons, which are never committed to writing, can be taught orally. We have in Proverbs xxv. 1 a suggestion that the matter there committed to writing had been preserved orally for centuries: "These are the proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, King of Judah, copied out." But Hezekiah was two hundred and seventy-five years after Solomon. The priests and the schools of the prophets may have preserved much of Moses's teaching orally, till the time of Ezra, the scribe. This would not make Moses any less the author of the Pentateuch.

But the evidence that Moses personally wrote these books is so strong that no other view it at all tenable. They contain much internal testimony of Mosaic authorship. The claim of such authorship is frequent in the record. In Deuteronomy, xxxi. 9-12, we read: "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is

within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law."

The book of the law was to be kept in the ark of the covenant. Deuteronomy xxxi. 26: "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Also in Exodus xl. 20 we have: "And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark." Joshua viii. 32 also bears testimony that Moses wrote the law: "And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel."

There are passages which suggest that Moses wrote not only the law, but the history of the journeys of the Israelites. "And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out." (Numbers xxxiii. 2.) "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." (Exodus xvii. 14.)

The foregoing passages will be sufficient to call to the mind of the reader that evidences of Moses's authorship of the Pentateuch abound in the text itself.

There are facts recorded in the history of Judah

and Israel which are explicable only on the assumption that the people at large had some knowledge of Moses, and knew that he had delivered to the people laws which were of unquestioned divine authority. One of these is recorded in 2 Kings xviii. and 2 Chronicles xxix., xxx. The good king, Hezekiah, calls both the kingdoms of Judah and Israel to assemble at Jerusalem to confess their sins and renew their covenant with God. The messengers went throughout the kingdom of Israel with this message: "Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified forever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you."

The fact that multitudes of people out of the neighboring kingdom of Israel joined with those of Judah, and came at this call to keep the Passover at Jerusalem, seems only possible upon the assumption that they well knew of their departure from the law.

The very temple and the temple service were witness to Moses's teaching and authority. When-

ever the people departed from the law, the temple and temple worship fell into neglect, "The ways of Zion mourned because none came to the solemn feasts"—the feasts which Moses had commanded. In the temple the priests and Levites served, offering the sacrifices and teaching the law as Moses had commanded. Here, in this return to the God of their fathers, it is noted: "The priests and Levites stood in their places, after their manner, according to the law of Moses, the man of God." The temple was an historic monument, and no one can question that the temple service flourished or declined according to the faithfulness of the people to the religion of their fathers or their departure from it. The laws and institutions of Moses were fostered and taught in the temple. His authority was always appealed to, to bring the people to the old paths. Moses is ever in religion and law, as in history, the founder of the Jewish nation and its peculiar institutions.

With one voice the Jews attribute their national polity and religion to Moses. With one voice they agree that he wrote the Pentateuch. Their testimony, coming down from the earliest ages of their history, fortified as it is by evidences ingrained in the very character of the people, cannot be refuted. It cannot, indeed, be reasonably questioned.

The argument advanced by some, that the Book of the Law found buried under the rubbish of the temple, by Hilkiah the priest, during the reign of

Josiah, B.C. 640, shows that the book was then first written; and that it was a forgery of the priests, to get control of the mind of the king, is not worthy of a serious mind. The terrible corruption and idolatry of the preceding king, Manasseh, and his effort to stamp out religion, might well be believed to have resulted in the destruction of the books of the law, so far as known, and the loss or hiding of this in the rubbish of the temple. It is the old story of the temple's desertion when the law of Moses was ignored. The grandest work of all their history, their noblest monument of architecture, was neglected as Moses was neglected. The revival which took place under the publishing of the law in the time of Josiah has all the arguments for the previous regard for Moses and the unquestioning acceptance of his authority that we have found in the history of the reformation under Hezekiah.

There is a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch, written in the ancient Semitic character, such as the Hebrews used down to the time of the captivity, but never after. There are strong reasons to believe that this Pentateuch was so much of the sacred Scriptures as were possessed by the Hebrews at the division of the kingdom in the days of Jeroboam, and that the Samaritans have possessed it since that time.

That is the claim which the little band of Samaritans, who live at the city of Nablous (Shechem) make for the Scriptures which they sacredly cher-

ish. And the priest who officiates in their temple to-day claims that the document was written out by Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and that when the ten tribes were carried into captivity a copy or copies, of the Pentateuch, including Joshua and Judges, was preserved among the poor remnant of the people who were left; and we know such a remnant was left in the land.

Bishop Foster makes no doubt that the Samaritan Scriptures have been in existence among these people from the time the kingdom of Israel was established under Jeroboam, and as the Samaritan Pentateuch corresponds with the Hebrew, the substantial existence of this part of the Scriptures in the days of the first kings of Israel cannot be doubted.

The uniform testimony of Jewish tradition to the fact that Moses wrote the Pentateuch is of more authority than all the conjecture of the critics.

If the methods of some of the higher critics are allowed, we can prove that the constitution of the United States was not written till after the war which freed the slaves. For does not the constitution declare that "all men are born free and equal"? A higher critic, not knowing when our constitution was framed, and seeking to fix the date from historic facts, would surely declare that the historic fact that slaves were held till the Civil War, and at that time made free, proved that this

constitution, declaring all men to be born free and equal, could not have been original in this government, or had a date earlier than the freeing of the slaves. We give this as an illustration of the methods from which some Bible critics have drawn the most confident conclusions. Continuous and uniform tradition, we insist, is of tenfold more value than such criticisms.

It has been denied that Homer wrote the sublime epic which bears his name. Books have been written to prove that Lord Bacon wrote the inimitable dramas which bear the name of Shakespeare. What do such doubts avail? These immortal productions live. They are indubitable proofs of great authors. They reveal the characteristics of those authors. Change of name makes no change in our conception of the genius and character of the writer. And if these productions had come down to us without even a tradition of their authorship, historic criticism would fix their probable place and date, from their point of view, the nature of their metaphors and allusions, the customs of the people indicated, the stage of development shown in the language in which the authors wrote, and the characters of the writers would appear in their works.

But in the case of one to whom is attributed not merely the authorship of a book, but a career which has influenced the world for all time, the testimonies are far more numerous and strong. The statesman lives in the state he has established,

the institutions he has founded. The founder of a religion or philosophical system lives in the system he has taught, and one who has been great in the activities of history leaves an abiding record in historic facts. Here is a people who tell us Moses was the founder of their institutions, the founder of their faith, the deliverer and leader of their people, and their institutions and faith stand through the ages to bear witness of the fact, and Moses is celebrated in history and in song through all their literature, as the great prophet of God who gave them freedom, religion, and national life. Here is the unbroken testimony of Moses's own people to all this. What a pitch of arrogance and presumption have the critics reached who attempt to set their logic against these facts. The method of historic criticism which they follow, if allowed, would authorize them to rewrite and reconstruct the whole history of the past.

But there are some things in the Pentateuch which Moses did not write. Certainly no one can doubt that the last chapter of Deuteronomy, in which Moses's death and burial are related was added in a later time. There is hardly room to doubt that the passage in Genesis xxxvi., regarding the kings of Edom, was written centuries after Moses's time, not only because of the lapse of time indicated in the long succession there detailed, but because the sixteenth verse clearly indicates that the record was made after kings began to reign in Israel. The author who wrote, "These are the

kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," certainly had knowledge of the time when kings began to reign in Israel, and wrote after that time. In Genesis xiv. 14, we are told that Abraham pursued Lot's captors unto Dan; but we are elsewhere told that the original name of the city was Laish (see Joshua xix. 47; Judges xviii. 27-29). The city was not called Dan in the time of Moses, but took that name after the division of the land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel. Also in Genesis xxiii. 2, we read that "Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron." And in Genesis xiii. 18, the place is mentioned simply as Hebron. But in Joshua xiv. 15 and Judges i. 10, we learn that Kirjath-arba was the old name, and Hebron that which was given the place centuries after, when the tribes took possession of Canaan. Moses therefore could not have written of Hebron, and this passage in Genesis is from a later writer, or else the original record has been revised and the later name of Hebron substituted for the earlier name of Kirjath-arba. This latter is probably the correct view. As we have before suggested, Ezra may have substituted later names for some that were obsolete, and added in some places explanatory notes.

CHAPTER X.

The Records and the Writers

Respecting the New Testament canon we may observe first, that the idea of a collection of sacred writings, which were to be held as absolute authority in matters of religious faith and duty, was fully established before the Christian movement began. The Jews had such a collection, and Jesus himself stood upon that ground, asserting the authority of the law and the prophets, and only claiming to be an interpreter of the Old Scriptures, and to lead forward in the way which they clearly pointed out. While he claimed to be an original revealer of truth, he yet accepted all former revelations, and was willing that his own teaching should be tested by any fair interpretation of them. There could be no contradictions or inconsistencies in the unfoldings of the purpose of God toward men.

Both Jesus and his disciples drew their texts from the Old Testament. One will readily understand that it could not be that the words of Jesus and his disciples should also be accepted as divine revelations until their authority was fully tested. In this case, as in the Old Testament, it must also be seen that the original revelation was not in the making of the record, but in the facts which the historian preserved—namely, the acts and words of Jesus and his apostles.

The time at which the history was written, and the evidences of its correctness, are the questions in controversy between Christians and infidels. As it is claimed that all the writings of the New Testament are from the apostles of Jesus, except the Gospels of Mark and Luke, who are both represented as contemporaries and companions of the apostles, it becomes necessary for Christian apologists to show proofs of this claim, by evidence that these writings were produced in the apostolic times.

The earliest of these writings were the apostolic epistles. Letters to the churches, written by the apostles during their ministry, and which were preserved by the churches, and read in their public assemblies, would be, in the natural order, the first Christian Scriptures, accepted by the Christians themselves as being of divine authority, proceeding from those who had personally learned of Jesus, and were personally commissioned to teach by him.

About these epistles there has been little controversy, for the facts of the remarkable career of Jesus of Nazareth at the time stated, and of the work of his immediate disciples, and the great movement resulting therefrom, can, by no means, be questioned, being authenticated by contemporary history, and by results which have been continuous and most prominent in the subsequent course of the world, even down to our time.

In A.D. 64, history records the first persecution of the Christians under Nero. This was only thirty-

four years after the death of Christ. But even at that time the Christian movement had spread through the civilized world. Referring to this first persecution, and the cause of it, the Roman historian, Tacitus, tells us that it was an effort on the part of Nero, the emperor, to turn away from himself the suspicion, in the minds of the populace, that he had contrived the burning of Rome. He says: "In order, therefore, to put a stop to the report, he laid the guilt and inflicted the severest punishments upon a sect of people who were held in abhorrence for their crimes, and called by the vulgar *Christians*. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again; and spread, not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also, whither all things that are shameful and horrible find their way, and are practiced. Accordingly the first who were apprehended confessed, and then on their information a vast multitude were convicted, not so much of the crime of setting Rome on fire as of hatred to mankind; and when they were put to death, mockery was added to their sufferings; for they were either disguised in the skins of beasts and worried to death by dogs, or they were crucified, or they were clothed in some inflammable covering, and when the day was closed were burned as lights to illumine the night. Nero lent his gardens for this exhibition, and also held the shows

of the circus, mingling with the people in the dress of a charioteer, or observing the spectacle from his chariot." (Annals, xv. 44.)

As respects the Christian Scriptures, no one could think it reasonable that the original records should be produced and their authorship identified. No complete copy of Homer dates back further than the thirteenth century. The earliest extant copy of Herodotus, one of the most ancient of historians, is no older than the ninth century, while there is but ony copy of Virgil that goes back of the fourth century. But of the New Testament we have more manuscripts than of any book in existence, and some of these date back to a period within two centuries of the time of the apostles of our Lord. The manner in which the writings of the New Testament have been preserved is remarkable. No other ancient books can be traced back so near the original records. There are four manuscript copies of the New Testament which are very ancient.

The "Codex Bezæ" has both a Greek and a Latin text in parallel columns. Beza obtained it from a monastery in Lyons in 1562, and in 1581 presented it to the University of Cambridge, England, in which library it is now preserved. It is a quarto, ten by eight inches. It is supposed that this copy was made about the middle of the sixth century, but it was transcribed from a much older text.

The "Codex Alexandrinus," we have reason to

believe, is older than the manuscript discovered by Beza. It was brought to Rome at an early date, and its history is not known. It is from its character that its age is approximately fixed. It contains nearly all of the New Testament, and is written in capital letters upon quarto leaves of vellum, thirteen by ten inches in size. There are no spaces between the words, and scarcely any punctuation. It is believed, by competent scholars and critics, that it could not have been executed later than 450 A.D.

The "Codex Vaticanus" has been in the Vatican library for more than four hundred years, but when it was placed there is unknown. The date of its execution is put at about A.D. 350.

The "Codex Sinaiticus" was discovered by Tischendorf, in the library of the convent of St. Catherine, on Mt. Sinai, in 1859. It contains the whole of the New Testament, written on leaves of vellum in capital letters. There are scarcely any marks of punctuation, and no separation of words. It was done about A.D. 350.

There are probably complete manuscripts of the New Testament older than any of these, for people in the earlier ages consigned to the débris of the past treasures which became of inestimable value when discovered by later generations. The "Codex Sinaiticus," now regarded as the most valuable of all ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, was revealed to the great German scholar Tischendorf, while a guest in the convent of St. Catherine, in

the rubbish which the nuns brought him to light his fire. Besides these ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, there have been discovered manuscripts of other books which prove the early existence of these Scriptures.

The same convent of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai, where Tischendorf discovered the precious manuscript above mentioned, has proved, since that time, a treasure house of other invaluable records. There, in 1889, Prof. Rendel Harris discovered the Syraic manuscript of the Apology of Aristides. This work, it is known, was presented to the Roman emperor Hadrian, at Athens, in A.D. 125. The author of this work sets forth the character of the Christian movement of his time, in this general outline: "The Christians reckon the beginning of their religion from Jesus Christ, who is named the Son of God Most High; and it is said that God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin took and clad himself with flesh, and in a daughter of man there dwelt the son of God. This is taught from the gospel, which a little while ago was spoken among them as being preached; wherein, if ye also will read, ye will comprehend the power that is upon it. This Jesus, then, was born of the tribe of the Hebrews, and he had twelve disciples, in order that a certain dispensation might be fulfilled. He was pierced by the Jews, and he died and was buried; and they say that after three days he rose and ascended to heaven; and then these twelve disciples went forth into the known parts of the world,

and taught concerning his greatness, with all humility. And on this account those also who to-day believe in this preaching are called Christians, who are well known."

Again in 1892 this convent of St. Catherine yielded up a most valuable treasure. Mrs. Agnes Smith Lewis and Mrs. James Y. Gibson, English ladies and accomplished scholars, while guests at the convent were shown a very ancient palimpsest manuscript. (A palimpsest is a second writing over a former record, the first having been painted out.) What they saw upon the surface was a history of the devotion of some Christian women; but as the cement upon which this was written was broken off in places, it revealed an earlier writing in Syriac. The ladies were permitted to photograph parts of the manuscript, which photographs they took back to England. These they showed to Prof. Bensley and Mr. Burkitt, of the British Museum. These gentlemen found that the first writing represented an early Syriac translation of the Gospels. Prof. and Mrs. Bensley, Mr. and Mrs. Burkitt, and Prof. Rendel Harris accompanied Mrs. Lewis back to the convent, and the manuscript, by the use of acids, was made legible, and was copied. Textual critics reckon this to be one of the very earliest versions of the Gospels, older than either the Peshito or Crutonian version.

For earlier witness of the existence of the New Testament Scriptures than that which is presented in any preserved copies, we go to the writ-

ings of the fathers. We find that at a very early period writers upon Christianity, both defenders and opposers, recognize the New Testament Scriptures, and quote extensively from them.

Irenæus was bishop of Lyons in France, and wrote in the latter half of the second century. He was born in Asia Minor, and his youth was spent amid the scenes of the labors of the apostles John and Paul. He was a pupil of Polycarp, and Polycarp had been taught, personally, by the apostle John. Referring to his association with Polycarp, Irenæus writes in his letter to Florinus: "The lessons of childhood are incorporated with the mind and grow with its growth, so that I can tell, even the very place, where the blessed Polycarp used to sit and discourse, and his going out and coming in, and the nature of his life, and the appearance of his person, and the discourses which he delivered to the multitude, and how he related his intercourse with John, and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he had remembered their words, and what he had heard from them concerning the Lord, and concerning his miracles —how Polycarp declared all these things in a manner agreeable to the Scriptures, as he had received them from those who were eyewitness of the word of life." Here is testimony given not more than a hundred and thirty years after the crucifixion of Christ, probably earlier, which refers to the Scriptures which contain the record of Christ's work.

Respecting the origin of the four Gospels, Irenæus writes: "Now Matthew published his treatise on the Gospel among the Hebrews, in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding the church there. But after their death, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also wrote down what Peter had preached, and delivered it to us. And Luke also, the follower of Paul, wrote out in a book the Gospel which was preached by that apostle. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast—he, too, published a Gospel, while he was living at Ephesus in Asia."

Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, wrote a defense of Christianity about A.D. 180, in which the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John are named.

The works of Clement of Alexandria quote extensively from all four of the Gospels. Clement died A.D. 220.

To these testimonies we can add that of Tertullian of Carthage, a voluminous writer in regard to Christianity, who refers to the records upon which the faith of the Church rested, as documents well and widely known.

The witness of these eminent men, placed at points widely separated, so as to represent almost the whole civilized world at that time, shows us not only that the gospel records then existed, but that they were well known, as we may say, throughout the world. The Church was an institution well

established and claiming a direct and well-known history from the time of Jesus Christ.

Even at the time of the writers whom we have named, Christianity had passed to what may be called its third stage—the stage of exposition and defense. First, there was the work of Jesus, whose teaching was entirely oral. This extended to A.D. 30. Then followed the work of the apostles, who also depended almost wholly on oral teaching, and whose theme was, especially, the life, teachings, and resurrection of Christ. During this time the pastoral epistles were produced, of which it is probable not all have been preserved. During the lives of the apostles, tradition, as we have seen from the quotation from Irenæus, also placed the origin of the four Gospels, reckoning that the first produced was that by Matthew, and the last that of John.

Now the writings of the fathers, to whom we have referred, abundantly indicate that the two stages of the development of Christianity referred to had passed. There was, in the middle of the second century, a Christian Church, holding the doctrines of the Church of to-day, and holding the same Scriptures which the Church now holds.

In view of these facts, so evident in the writings of the fathers, there is no reasonable conclusion but that Scriptures, so extensively known and accepted in their time, as from Jesus' immediate disciples, were written in a previous generation and within the apostolic period. Another fact, which we ought to remember, is, that the histories con-

tained in the writings of the evangelists introduced nothing new into the faith of the Church. It is certain that the Church was well established before these histories appeared, and that when they appeared they had to be tested by those who had been orally taught, by the apostles of Christ and their disciples, the very things which the Gospels contained. The Gospels were not written for the purpose of establishing a movement, but are histories, of the most simple character, of a movement which was already widespread.

According to ecclesiastical history, the apostle John died at Ephesus in the third year of the reign of the Emperor Trajan, *i. e.*, A.D. 100. We have seen that Irenæus, about A.D. 180, wrote of all four of the Gospels, and gave the opinion which was then held of their origin. We have seen also that, as early as A.D. 125, Aristides wrote his defense of Christianity, giving such an outline of its doctrines as the Gospels contain, and suggesting to the Emperor Hadrian that he read the records in which these things were taught. We should also here mention the writings of Justin Martyr, who presented his Apology for Christianity to the Emperor Antonine, about A.D. 148, and soon after published his dialogue with Tryphon, and about 165 wrote a second Apology, which he presented to Aurelius and the Roman Senate. From the writings of this father might be gathered almost every fact mentioned in the four Gospels concerning the life and work of Christ. There has also been discovered, in

the last quarter of a century, the Diatessaron of Tatian, which is compiled of the four Gospels. Tatian was a disciple of Justin Martyr, and composed this work in the latter part of the second century.

Thus the manner in which the Gospels are referred to, from the middle of the second century, makes it certain that their origin was considerably earlier than that time. It leaves, indeed, no reasonable doubt that the tradition of the early Church respecting the origin of these writings was correct.

We must not close this chapter without referring to a testimony, found in the first three Gospels, giving indubitable evidence of their early production. It is the prophecy of Jesus concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, which all three of these Gospels contain. The prophecy is graphic, and in no sense ambiguous.

After Jesus had spoken of the overthrow of the temple, his disciples, still connecting in their thoughts the fall of the Jewish State with the end of the age, and the second coming of their Lord, asked, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the world?" Three questions are here asked, which Jesus severally answered. We quote only that regarding the overthrow of Jerusalem. The description is substantially the same in all three of the Gospels, and we quote from all three in this general statement of it.

"When ye therefore shall see Jerusalem com-

passed with armies, and the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee unto the mountains, and let him which is in the midst of it depart out. Let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take anything out of his house. Neither let him that is in the field turn back again for to take up his garment, for these are the days of vengeance. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations. There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This generation shall not pass away until all these things be done."

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees; fill ye up the measures of your fathers. Behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would

not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me from henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

"When he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."[1]

We must refer our readers to the history of Josephus, a commander of the Jews during the siege of Jerusalem, for testimony of the full and fearful fulfillment of these prophecies. Such horrors of war, famine, and pestilence, as assailed the doomed city, were never equaled in the history of the human race. The streets were full of dead bodies. Famine led parents to eat their own children. Pestilence filled the houses with dead. Eleven hundred thousand Jews perished in the city in five months. When the city was taken and the temple burned, ten thousand dead lay around the foundations of the holy house, and six thousand more were consumed in its flames.

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[1] For these prophecies, see Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi.; Matt. xxiii. 29–39; Luke xix. 41–44.

It is also recorded that no Christians perished in the siege of Jerusalem. They believed Jesus' word, and fled from the city at the approach of the Roman army, as he had commanded. All these things came to pass thirty-seven years after Jesus' crucifixion.

It is impossible to believe that such prophecies as Matthew, Mark, and Luke record were forged after the events occurred. When Jews and Gentiles were earnest to suppress the Christian movement, such a forgery could not have escaped detection.

In conclusion, we ask, Why should there be any controversy or doubt upon this subject? There are no other records so ancient as these Scriptures which are so extensively quoted, so often referred to, or in regard to which there was a more perfect consensus of opinion from a date so near their origin. If, in view of the testimony before us, we doubt the authenticity of the four Gospels, we shall be compelled, even the more, to doubt the authenticity of the Greek and Roman classics. It must be remembered that we are dealing with a question in regard to which hundreds of opposers of Christianity have persistently striven to raise doubts. They have exhausted every theory and subterfuge. If they require us to prove, with absolute certainty, the authorship of the writings of the New Testament, they require what cannot be done in regard to the most valued books of ancient

history. But we can say confidently that the testimony given leaves no place for reasonable doubt.

A system of criticism which would set aside beliefs and opinions, no matter how venerable, or by whom held, and would characterize all historic references as tradition, and seek to exalt above all these what it is pleased to denominate the scientific method of historic criticism, in truth proposes to construct history according to its own predilection.

As respects all the New Testament Scriptures following the Gospels, their value and their claim are in the faithfulness with which they represent the spirit and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. That they proceeded from men who believed in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and who were called to be his ministers, none can question. The consistency of their testimony, the self-denial of their lives, the love which they revealed for men, the offering of themselves fully on the altar of their devotion, furnishes evidence never challenged, that they were Jesus' true disciples, and that the wonderful Man of Nazareth was the source of that movement which these devoted ones spread wide in their day, and which has come down to us as the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XI.

The Claims and Methods of the Prophets.

In the word prophet, the prefix *pro* has reference to place rather than to time. The prophet spoke for, or instead of, another. The idea of prediction was not, necessarily, involved in the functions of the Hebrew "Nabi"—prophet; nor is foretelling necessarily implied in our English word "prophesy." To prophesy may be only to teach or expound divine truth. Among the Hebrews a prophet, in the highest sense, was a man, God-appointed and God-directed. When true to his mission, he was an ambassador of Jehovah, declaring Jehovah's will to the people. Thus, Moses was a prophet of the highest order, and most like to that perfect revealer of the divine will—the Christ—to whom he referred when he said to Israel (Deut. xviii. 15): "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." And so Peter interpreted it on the day of Pentecost. (Acts iii. 22.)

Samuel was a prophet, only less than Moses, in fixing the authority of Jehovah in the faith and institutions of the Hebrew people. Coming forward in a time of exceeding corruption, involving the priests no less than the people, Samuel recognized two especial needs: the first, a better admin-

istration of the laws of Moses; the second, a better system of teaching and expounding the religious system which Moses had given. Therefore, while he went forth from Ramah to hold yearly courts at Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, he also established the school of the prophets, an institution which proved a great power in the religious life of the nation through all its after history.

The priests, secure in official position, occupied about sacrifices and rituals, and having their support provided by the tithes and offerings, were peculiarly liable to condone public vices, and to represent allegiance to Jehovah as consisting in ceremonial observances. But the prophets had no provision for their support. They were not the patrons of any class of people. Their business was to seek direct communion with God, and to grasp the spiritual import of his revelations and providences. The prophets, therefore, are never teaching the people about rituals, and often break in upon a merely formal religion with the strongest denunciations. "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." (Isa. i. 13.)

While the prophets, directly called and inspired of God, were superior, in the conscience of the people, to king or priest, and always rose above every form of servility, asserting the very authority of the Most High, yet the great majority who

composed the schools—the sons of the prophets—were but teachers of divine truth in a secondary grade. They studied the prophecies of their masters and the words of the great revealers of divine truth who had gone before them. They were sedulous students of the law and of the past history of their people. The sacred oracles were taught orally in their schools, and the treasures of divine revelation cherished. If there were any written prophecies from the time the schools were founded by Samuel until the time of Jonah, more than a hundred and fifty years later, they have not come down to us. But both before and after Jonah the schools of the prophets were the repositories of divine revelation, whether oral or written.

As respects the spirit of prophecy, two facts are always made prominent. The first is, the prophets were conscious of a divine call to the prophetic office; and the second is, that they were also assured of the objective source and reality of that which they declared to be the word of God.

The prophet never chooses for himself the prophetic vocation. It is ever the mandate of Jehovah—the overwhelmning constraint of the Divine Spirit—which assigns him to this service. Human nature ever shrinks from the searching light of God's holiness, and the utter self-renunciation required of the man who yields himself an instrument to God's will. This is a psychological fact with which the accounts which the prophets give of their call accord. Amos says: "I was no prophet,

neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos vii. 14, 15.) In the sixth chapter of Isaiah we have an account of the call of that prophet. First, there comes upon him a vision of the ineffable glory and holiness of the Lord of hosts, at which vision he is overwhelmed with the sense of his own corruption, and made to cry out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." Then came to him a seraph with a burning coal from the altar and touched his lips. Thus was symbolized his deliverance, by the Spirit of God, from all carnal motives and human fear, and self-will, that he might fully and faithfully speak the word of God. Jeremiah, feeling the call to prophesy, as the imperative will of Jehovah, answers: "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." But he says: "The Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."

The prophet had his message from the Lord. It was not born simply of his faith and zeal. It was not a conclusion of his own reason. To deal with the prophetic messages as if they rose from such a source would be to discredit the claims of the prophets beforehand, and degrade the prophets themselves to the characters of enthusiasts or deceivers.

The forms of speech which the prophets employ to introduce their deliverances are intended to represent them as coming from the Lord. It is the word of the Lord by the mouth of his prophet. Zechariah says of the people: "They made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets." (Zech. vii. 12.) Amos prophesies because constrained by a divine power—a power too great to be resisted, as when a shepherd hath met a lion. "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos iii. 8.) Often is this constraining divine influence upon the prophets represented under the figure of the hand of the Lord. "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation." (Jeremiah xv. 17.) "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him." (Ezekiel i. 3.)

The prophet's messages might turn king and people to be his enemies. They might be rejected, and bring upon him who uttered them reproach and suffering; but the constraining Spirit of God drove him forward. Witness this strong passage from Jeremiah xx. 7-9: "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily,

every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." The word "deceived" here means enticed or allured, and it probably refers back to the prophet's call as related in chapter i., where Jeremiah pleads, "I am a child," and the Lord bids him go as he is sent, and speak as he is commanded. In the confidence of divine guidance he went forth, but manifold disappointments and increasing dangers made him feel, almost, that he was mistaken and he would fain have surrendered a commission so burdensome.

From the examples adduced, which are in harmony with the general tone of the prophecies, we would say, the mental state of the prophet may be generally regarded as one in which he knows himself to be under divine influence, and, to a certain extent, passive, as an instrument in God's hands.

Respecting the manner in which the divine revelations were conveyed to the prophet's mind, the process was generally, if not always, objective. Visions were common, presenting in symbols the truths to be communicated. In these visions existing conditions were often set forth with promises or threatenings for the future. Ezekiel saw in the valley of dry bones the dejected and apparently hope-

less state of his people as they were in his day, and in the vivifying of these dead the promise of their restoration to the divine favor. He saw also, in his vision of the pollutions of the temple, a panorama of all the iniquities for which the judgments of God were ready to burst upon Judah. The sequel of the vision is the terrible words of the Lord: "Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." (Ezekiel viii. 18.) The vision was the usual form of revelation. Even where no statement is made of such manifestation, the language often implies it. One cannot miss this thought in reading Nahum's prophecy concerning the destruction of Nineveh, or Isaiah's description of the invasion of Sennacherib, or Jeremiah's description of the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar. Indeed, almost all the prophetic utterances concerning future events are in a form which suggests a vision. Moreover, the designation of these utterances as "the vision" which the prophet saw, and the common designation of the prophet himself as the seer, not only assure us that the vision was the common form of revelation, but leave us in doubt whether it was not the only medium of direct divine manifestations. In the case of Moses, it is represented that his guidance and instruction were from miraculous interpositions. The burning bush, the plagues of Egypt, the pillar of cloud, the dividing of the sea, the terrors of Sinai, were not

visions, but the manifestations of Jehovah in objective realities. Therefore, it is said of Moses that "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

Accepting the idea that revelations were made to the prophets who came after Moses, generally, if not uniformly, by visions, we obtain important suggestions regarding the interpretation of prophecy. The vision gives only an outline. It impresses upon the mind of the prophet a truth regarding the mind of God toward the people, or a future event, without fixing the time of its occurrence, save as that may sometimes be suggested by concurrent circumstances also revealed. The visions of the prophets foreshadowed great events, vaguely, and oftentimes the prophet, who saw the vision and related it, but half understood its meaning. A general idea of what was symbolized was received and taught. Without this, he who saw the vision would have been no prophet. Pharaoh had visions foreshadowing the distress that should come upon Egypt, and Belshazzar saw visions which gave warning of impending judgments; but neither Pharaoh nor Belshazzar were able to interpret the visions for themeslves. They were not prophets. Joseph for the one and Daniel for the other must explain the objective manifestations, and read the handwriting of God in his symbols of truth.

From the foregoing it appears that we must expect to find in prophecy the spiritual interpreta-

tion of the law and the history of Israel, and, for the future, an outline of the course of religious development, as the purposes of God unfold. And where especial providences are revealed, as in the judgments which were denounced upon Zion and her enemies, we must look only for general outlines, sufficiently definite to notify the generation to whom they were delivered of the impending changes, and of their general character and purpose, yet sufficiently full to be recognized in their historic fulfillment by those who should see them accomplished.

The prophets never claim continuous inspiration. The coming upon them of the inspiring spirit is distinctly recognized. Sometimes they sought revelations and waited for them, as, witness the account given us in the forty-second chapter of Jeremiah, where the people come to inquire of the prophet, and he says: "I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the Lord your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, that whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer you, I will declare it to you. . . . And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah." But it is to be noted that the tone of the prophet is always in harmony with the thought of revelation from God. The prophet does not argue, he commands; he does not reason, he declares. He will not withhold the message which God gives him, but will declare it at any cost. The claim of being under direct influence of the Divine Spirit

could not be more strongly or constantly asserted by the prophets, neither could it be more consistently maintained in the character of their utterances.

The prophets speak, not their own words, but the word of the Lord; and in that word their own feelings as men, and prejudices as Jews, are lost. They speak not out of their own hearts or minds. There comes upon them an influence from without, an influence from beyond. They are caught in the stream of divine purpose, they speak of man in his relation to God. They interpret the past in correct relation to God's purposes. They see the future as God reveals it. Such were the prophets of Israel, who dared introduce their deliverances with "Thus saith the Lord."

CHAPTER XII.

The Testimony of Prophecy.

We have seen that the prophets claimed to be God's messengers, receiving from him the word which they delivered. We proceed to inquire, especially, concerning the evidences by which such a claim can be supported; and here we accept the task of proving that the prophets, both in their character and their utterances, transcended the natural motives and the natural knowledge of men, and that the history which has intervened since their day constantly witnesses to them as agents who truly foretold the advancing purposes of God. The fulfillment of specific prophecies is less important in this connection, and will be noticed hereafter. What we beg to adduce here, as the highest evidence that the prophets were inspired, is the general scheme of prophecy, and the spirit of the prophets.

In respect to the scheme of prophecy we shall consider its lofty spiritual tone, its interpretation of the covenant, the law, the theocracy, and Israel's national history, its revelation of Christ, and emergence into the new dispensation.

The prophets, as men *en rapport* with the divine mind, deal with man's moral nature as it is related to God. Statutes and ordinances, rituals and ceremonies, the teaching of the letter of the law, may all fall short of God's requirements. Samuel's

words to Saul may be taken as announcing the general programme of prophecy in regard to its teaching of personal religion. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." That this is the general tone of prophetic teaching scarcely needs to be argued. We adduce a few passages in further illustration. "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hosea vi. 6.) "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel xviii. 31.) "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" (Isaiah i. 11, 12.) "To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me." (Jeremiah vi. 20.)

Though true religion is of the heart, it is not in emotion or meditation, but in deeds of love to men; for God is the Father of all, and our service reaches not to him, but to our fellow-men, of whose rights he is jealous and in whose happiness he delights.

"Wash you and make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." (Isa. i. 16, 17.)

Ezekiel, who was himself a priest, sometimes enjoins ceremonial services, but in the character of a good man, as drawn in the eighteenth chapter of his prophecy, he only speaks of justice, mercy, purity, righteousness, charity, the fear of God, and freedom from idolatry, as distinguishing virtues. "If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbor's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, and hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; he that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xviii. 5-9.)

Surely in such utterances as these we have the highest and best conception of the true worship of God to be found in any literature, or in the religious teachings of any nation. It does not avail to answer such a fact by saying the Hebrew peo-

ple had an especial genius for religion. Teaching, which we are compelled to accept as the full declaration of essential truth, so far as relates to man's individual service of God, we must own to be the will of God, and the genius to perceive and declare it can only be thought of as an induement of divine wisdom. Truth is divine, by whomsoever spoken. It carries in its appeal to human reason and conscience its own witness of divine authority, since it is impossible that we should believe of any moral teaching that it is right, yet not the will of the moral Governor of the world. In general civilization, the Hebrews were far inferior to some other nations of their day. If, then, the world must accept these teachings of the prophets, in the sphere of personal duty and spiritual thought, as the best for all time, such a fact would seem sufficient to authorize that form of utterance which these prophets adopted when they introduced their deliverances with, "Thus saith the Lord God."

In respect to the covenant made with Abraham, its terms implied a purpose embracing the whole human race. It contained the distinct statement, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xii. 3.)

But that he might preserve revealed truth from corruption and loss, and prepare through generations a treasure house of divine knowledge both in his revelations and the history of his providences, the Lord gave to his people institutions and laws which shut them off, severely, from other people.

It was but natural that the Hebrews, at large, regarded these peculiarities of their polity as marking them as the especially chosen of Jehovah, and upon this ground developed, according to the tendency of carnal nature, pride, self-righteousness, and intolerance. They thought of other nations as subjects of God's wrath rather than of any schemes of mercy. They had no plans for the salvation of other people. When their own national peace in life seemed to be threatened by their neighbors, it was time to say, "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered."

But the prophets always had a clear view of the universality of God's plans for the salvation of men. In his vision of the blessings to be brought to the world under the reign of the Anointed One, David says: "His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." (Ps. lxxii. 17.) The same truth is declared by Isaiah: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." (Isa. xi. 10.) The glory of Zion restored shall be the joy of the Gentiles. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (Isa. lx. 3.) "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name,

and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i. 11.)

Respecting the theocracy, the whole history contained in the book of Judges tells us how low the common conception of it was, and what a miserable failure it proved to be under such a view.

Moses was a prophet of God, teaching men the nature of the true God, their moral relations to him, and the duties which he required of them. He was not altogether nor chiefly an original teacher in this sphere. There had been many who walked according to the laws of God ages before the great Hebrew lawgiver. The Ten Commandments did not reveal new obligations nor call to the performance of duties unrecognized and unobserved before. But the thing, especially, which Moses was called to do, was to lay down the basis for a national polity. During the patriarchal times, the authority of a father in covenant relation with God and guided of him would secure, without the machinery of statutes and ordinances and official administrations, all that was practicable in authority, wisely guided, for holding the tribe in the way of right faith and conduct. But when Israel came out of Egypt, the first obvious need was organization of government, on a broader basis, and according to a national and not a tribal scheme. The twelve tribes were to be bound in one after a plan of government which would be sufficient for the needs of a growing nation. But the ideal of the patriarchs

—or rather the divine ideal which the patriarchs had accepted, for Moses claimed that the ideal was of God—was still to be maintained. The law of God therefore—the Ten Commandments—was first laid down as the basis of the government to be established, the *Magna Charta* for the guidance of the people. Upon this basis the statutes were established, to carry the morality of the Ten Commandments into effect in civil administrations. The aim was a civil government founded solely on the will of God; nothing less, in short, than God ruling over men—men owning no duty but such as was revealed in God's law.

This was the ideal of the theocracy—a form of government entirely unique in comparison with all other nations of the earth, and that which made Israel, especially, the peculiar people of God—peculiar in the revelations which they had received, and the duties which they had accepted; and thus in the history of the world clearly marked as the people of special providence, and appointed to the special purpose of establishing the reign of Jehovah over all men.

It is probable that Moses himself did not see how far away the realization of such an ideal must be. He took no steps toward organizing and perpetuating an administrative machinery. While he stood as God to the people, the nation had a theocratic head and administrator, so far as lay in the power of a God-appointed and God-directed man. But Jethro, the ruler of Midian, Moses's father-in-

law, quickly saw that some better provision for administering the law must be made. Even the law of God proclaimed by Moses could not be made effective without machinery to administer it. Hence he led Moses to appoint the seventy judges. After Moses this system of judges, without a ruling head, representing the divine will, gave place to tribal strifes and a state of lawlessness in which, according to the Scripture record, every man did "what was right in his own eyes." The people were helpless before their enemies, save that, from time to time, God did interpose, and speak to his people, and make bare his arm to defend them, so as to assert still his covenant relation and providential purpose respecting them. A dark period of history is this of the judges, but nowhere in Israel's history are there more manifest interpositions of the divine hand, answering wonderfully the claim of the people to have no ruler but God. "The time would fail to tell of Gideon, and Barak, and Deborah and Samson, and Jephtha, who out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

But the ideal was too lofty. It could not be attained even under a divinely guided leader like Gideon or Deborah. It assumed men as subjects delivered from carnal motives and worldly ambitions, with God's law written upon their hearts. Israel was far from attaining this. The ideal of the theocracy was impractical. When Samuel, with statesmanlike wisdom, began a movement to redeem his

people from a state of anarchy, by the establishment of courts of justice for the enforcing of the law, the movement must needs go further, though Samuel is reluctant to accept the issue. For national government, for unity, and the steady administration of law, Israel must have a king. Yet it seemed to the prophet Samuel to be the abandoning of a divine plan, a thing against which he protested, but was directed of God to grant the people their will.

But the ideal of theocracy was not abandoned by the prophets. To their thought this apparent failure threw light on the future. They would not interpret any dispensation of providence as being without a spiritual lesson. The theocracy was fundamental in the conceptions of the great lawgiver, Moses; it was fundamental in the faith of Israel. The accomplishment of God's plan and promise demanded it; but the thought of attaining it when the law of the divine kingdom was not written in men's hearts had brought the darkest period in the Hebrew history. But to the prophets the divine kingdom, the universal reign of Israel's king, remained an enchanting vision, developed beyond all the strifes of this world and spreading its glory over all mankind. But the awful nature of sin with which God's plans had to struggle was becoming more manifest. "The law entered that the offense might abound, and that sin by the law might appear exceeding sinful." The covenant with Israel, and through Israel with

the world, could not fail. It represented the purpose of the Maker and Ruler of the world. Human hope might outrun the consummation, but the divine ideal should be attained. It was the foregone decree of the Almighty, and the star of hope for all men. But the order then existing had to pass away. The religion of rituals or of an outward law could not secure true allegiance to Jehovah. It could not be attained under the existing polity. Therefore, the prophets proclaimed the fall of the Jewish state, yet predicted the triumph and universal reign of the Lord's Anointed. But their vision reached to a spiritual kingdom.

It was manifest that "the law made nothing perfect." "Righteousness was not of the law." Something more than knowledge of God and truth is needed to make men righteous. Nor could sacrifices avail. "It was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin." These truths, declared by Paul, in after time, were seen and confessed by the prophets under the old dispensation.

A new dispensation the prophets saw to be necessary. It would seem that Moses himself saw the incompleteness of the system which he established, and understood that it adumbrated a higher revelation. When the law was given at Sinai, Moses represented the Lord as saying, "Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" (Deut. v. 29.)

Moses also suggested the failure of the theocratic scheme, and that the lack of heart loyalty to Jehovah might lead the people to desire a king. (Deut. xvii. 14, 15.) And, depicting all the evil which should come upon them for disobedience, he mentions with other distresses that they should be carried away into captivity with their king, thus assuming the fact of a king in the future.

All the afflictions and scourgings against which the people were warned in the law were prefaced with an "if." They were to result upon condition that Israel did not remain true to the covenant. But in later years, viewing the iniquity of the people, and the constant trend of national affairs toward deeper corruption, the prophets no longer speak with an "if," but proclaim the overthrow of the state, the dispersion of the people, and the breaking up of the Jewish polity as inevitable—a doom from which there was no escape. This, however, was not to be thought of as a failure of the divine plan indicated in the covenant with Abraham. To bring blessing to all the world through him and his seed was still the purpose of Jehovah. The existing order was temporary, and preparatory of the true theocracy, and the extending of the covenant blessing to all mankind.

Daniel saw that the kingdom which should be set up above all human dominion was yet in the future; that it should be established by a power to man visible, and should abide forever. Human powers were represented by the many-metaled

image of a man. The divine kingdom was projected upon the world by an invisible force. This kingdom should overwhelm human powers and agencies and institutions, leveling all high things, exalting lowly things, and asserting the equality and common rights of all men. This triumph of the divine kingdom was not the extension of Jewish temporal dominion, for he foretells the destruction of the city and sanctuary, and that the sacrifice and oblation shall cease. (Dan. ix. 26, 27.)

Isaiah, in his prophecy of the Anointed One, who should come forth to rule the world, and to whom the Gentiles should be gathered, represents not the perpetuation of David's royal authority, but that which comes of the especial anointing of God. Jesse, the old farmer of Bethlehem, and not David, is mentioned as the ancestor of this righteous branch. His succession as related to David should be one of divine choice and anointing as David's was. (Isa. xi.)

There are prophecies which, if they stood alone, would be taken to declare the perpetuity and unbroken succession of dominion in the lineal descendants of David. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4.)

This covenant is recorded in 2 Samuel vii. 11-13, where it is said of David's son Solomon, "I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever"; a

promise which we find recorded again in 1 Chronicles xvii. 11-14, where it is said, "I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom forever: and his throne shall be established for evermore."

There was to be, of David's line, One who should be "a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek"—*i. e.*, a priest directly anointed of God, and holding his priestly office not by any hereditary claim, without father or mother as pertaining to the priesthood. (Psa. cx. 4.) But it is very manifest that the eternal dominion of David's line, and the universality of the kingdom which David should attain, were spiritualized in the interpretations of the prophets, and removed from all worldly power. As an earthly power, David's kingdom should fail. Hosea describes a long period which should come in Israel's history when they should have no nationality, and no order of priesthood, nor sacrifices, yet should be without a taint of idolatrous corruption, for they should also be without an image, and without a teraphim; never going after another God, but like a woman betrothed waiting the fulfillment of the covenant of espousal. The state of Israel at this very day is vividly pictured. "And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim: afterwards shall the

children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." (Hosea iii. 3-5.) The spiritual sense of this prophecy is fully accepted in the Targum of Jonathan, which thus paraphrases it: "Afterwards the children of Israel shall repent, and shall inquire for the worship of Jehovah their God, and shall obey Messiah, the Son of David their king, and shall come in troops to the worship of Jehovah, and great shall be their happiness at the end of days." The same vision of the sore sifting and trial of Israel, their long desolation and affliction, appeared to Amos, and their after restoration is thus declared: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." (Amos ix. 11, 12.) These words were written in the time of Israel's greatest prosperity, during the reign of Jeroboam II. The long affliction which should come to Israel, their captivity among the Gentiles, and their ultimate gathering—the Gentiles with them—can only be interpreted of a kingdom far other than the earthly rule of any descendant of David.

The scope of this work limits us to these sketches, which indicate the spiritual trend of the prophecies as respects their interpretation of the covenant and the theocracy.

The prophets saw in the covenant a purpose fixed, and from which no temporal powers and no earthly changes could turn the divine hand. As respected its benefits, it ever had two aspects; one related to those benefits which were inherent in providential conditions, and which in no way depended upon personal choice or action. The Hebrew could not attribute to personal merit the fact that his nation was especially favored with the revelations of divine truth. Just as the man who has been under Christian light to-day can claim no personal merit that he was not born in a Hottentot's tent. A plan for giving the knowledge of the true God to the whole world was involved in God's scheme of human history, and was not dependent upon the moral merit of men or nations.

This increase of light might bring increased affliction instead of increased happiness and prosperity. It is here that the element of human agency came in and the justice of God to reward every man according to his works. This fact, that the Hebrews were to be held to more rigorous account than other nations, Amos declares: "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the famiies of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos iii. 1, 2.)

We have results conditioned on human will and action so far as God's favor toward individuals or

nations is concerned, but above and beyond all this we have the foregone purpose of Jehovah to give divine light, with all its offered privileges, to all men through the seed of Abraham. Moreover, as respects God's favor to individuals, there was always hope. For Jehovah's covenant was not like a compact between equals. Men enter into covenant, and if one is unfaithful, the covenant is broken, is dissolved, and its conditions withdrawn. But God's covenant of grace is like his covenant in nature. The conditions of blessing remain, though one may by disregarding them fall into affliction. If the laws of nature are violated, one suffers; but the laws remain, inviting him to correct his conduct and turn to the way of safety. Or we may compare God's covenant with the covenant of a father with his child. Prompted only by a desire for the child's good, the provision for good, the readiness to do good, remain while the child is prodigal and disobedient. There is always invitation to return, there is always a call to repentance. A father receives joyfully a returning child, and God receives a repenting sinner. Thus in its twofold plan, that of enlightening the nations, and that of continually offering blessing to all men, Jehovah's covenant was immutable and everlasting.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Doom of Israel's Foes.

All the utterances of the Hebrew prophets are to be considered under two heads, those which refer to their own people, and those which refer to the enemies of their nation and religion; but in each they pass beyond merely temporal views; what they see is Jehovah warring for his cause, to vindicate his claims in the eyes of all nations; and the end of all is to be the extension of his sway over the whole world in righteousness and blessing. Nations and cities have significance in this struggle chiefly for the principles which they represent.

The course of Providence, indicated, is ever the defeat and utter overthrow of all which opposes the purpose of Jehovah—his revelations of truth and his scheme of salvation, as embraced in the covenant; while, on the other hand, the covenant people, as his children, are subject to chastisement and instruction for their purification and advancement. To transcribe all the specific prophecies of the Bible, and note their fulfillment in history would, alone, require a volume much larger than this. A mere glance at the two classes of prophecies mentioned will, we think, be sufficient.

In the beginning of Hebrew history, Ishmael, the son of Abraham, was cut off from covenant relation to God, for the Lord said to Abraham, "In

Isaac shall thy seed be called." From Ishmael and Isaac two races descended whose history and characteristics lie far apart. The first preserved, with wonderful fidelity, the external character and manners of the patriarch, his nomadic life, his dwelling in tents, his costume and habits and patriarchal rule. The descendants of the other, taught in the religion of Jehovah, sent to school in Egypt, and forced to till the fields and build the treasure cities of the Pharaohs, then drilled to the camp and the march, the experiences of war, and the sole command of a leader, and, above all, impressed with faith in the special guidance of God, were prepared to plant a national civilization, dominated by their religion, in the land of promise. The distinction between the Bedouin of the desert and the Jew stands as a testimony of the special providence which guided the covenant people. But for special guiding and schooling, the descendants of Isaac would have been as the descendants of Ishmael.

The prophecy concerning Ishmael is exceedingly striking: "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." (Gen. xvi. 12.) "I will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." (Gen. xvii. 20.) Nearly four thousand years ago was this prophecy uttered, and, in every period from that to the present time, it has

been perfectly suited to the descendants of Ishmael. "The Arab of to-day," says Bishop Foster, "answers to the portrait drawn nearly four thousand years ago. Ishmael, equally with Isaac, is a permanent memorial of the inspiration of the prophetic overshadowing. It is impossible to explain the facts on any other theory. Warred upon by all the nations of antiquity, they have still retained their independence; surrounded by the impact of other races, they have perpetually resisted alliance and interfusion; the blood of Ishmael still flows unadulterated in their veins; their home is still the tent. Free as the winds which sweep their coasts, they still roam the desert inhabited by their ancestors, the terror of strangers and the insoluble enigma of civilization. The very name, Arab, suggests everything in the prophecy."

Nineveh was the first of the ancient cities to fall under the judgments pronounced by Jehovah's prophets. When these maledictions were uttered Nineveh was the greatest city of the world, the capital of the Assyrian empire. It was described by historians as being at least forty-eight, probably sixty, miles in circuit, with walls a hundred feet high, and thick enough for three chariots to drive abreast on the top, and on the walls were fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high.

Such was Nineveh when the prophet Nahum proclaimed her doom, nearly a hundred years before she fell. He sets forth in the preface to his prophecy both the righteousness and the patience

of Jehovah. But his purposes toward Nineveh have an end. "The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." (Nahum i. 1-3.) "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood will he make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time." (Nahum i. 7-9.) In harmony with this prophecy, Nineveh went down at a stroke, and revived no more. The end was "with an overrunning flood." Diodorus Siculus, a Roman historian of the time of Julius and Augustus Cæsar, tells the story of Nineveh's fall; and this account, from this heathen source, is found to be in perfect accord with Nahum's prophecy. The Medes under Cyaxares and the Babylonians under Nabopolassar, B.C. 625, besieged Nineveh. Siculus says that Sardanapalus, the king of Assyria, after the complete discomfiture of his army, confided in an old prophecy that Nineveh could not be taken unless the river should become the enemy of the city; that after an ineffectual siege

of two years by the combined army of the Medes and Babylonians, the river, swollen with long-continued and tempestuous torrents, inundated the city, and threw down the wall for a space of twenty furlongs; and the king, deeming the prediction accomplished, despaired of his safety and erected an immense funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which himself, his household and palace were consumed. Besides the passage quoted from Nahum, that prophet refers again to this destruction by a flood in chapter ii., verse 6, "The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved"; and in verse 8, "Nineveh is of old like a pool of water; yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, shall they cry; but none shall look back." Diodorus Siculus says: "The king of Assyria, elated with his former victories and ignorant of the revolt of the Bactrians, had abandoned himself to scandalous inaction; had appointed a time of festivity, and supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine; and the general of the enemy, apprised by deserters of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence, destroyed a great part of them and drove the rest into the city." Such is history. The prophet had said, "While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." (Nahum i. 10.)

Nineveh was to have no future. She should not

rise from her first ruin. "The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!" (Zeph. ii. 13, 15.) So complete was the destruction of Nineveh that its site was for ages lost. In the second century Lucian, who was a native of a city on the banks of the Euphrates, testified that Nineveh was utterly perished, that there was no vestige of it remaining, and that none could tell where it was situated. But for thirteen centuries past it has been believed that the site of Nineveh has been fairly determined. Gibbon so understood, when he described the battle which decided the fate of Chosroes. "The Romans," he says, "boldly advanced from the Araxes to the Tigris, and the timid prudence of Rhazates was content to follow them by forced marches through a desolate country, till he received a peremptory mandate to risk the fate of Persia in a decisive battle. Eastward of the Tigris, at the end of the bridge of Mosul, the great Nineveh had formerly been erected; the city, and even the ruins of the city, had long since disappeared; the vacant space afforded a spacious field for the operations of two armies." Late researches have established the fact that the field here described was the place where stood great Nineveh. The explorations of Layard, Rawlinson, Hincks, Rassan, Botta, Bonomi, and others, have removed all doubt. The ancient city of Nineveh is

buried under the débris of centuries on the bank of the Tigris near Mosul. The towers of Khorsibad, Karamles, Nimroud, and Nebbi-Yunus, which require a circle of sixty miles to inclose them, are remains of ancient Nineveh. The village of Nebbi-Yunus stands over the ancient palace of Sennacherib. For two thousand five hundred years the site of the great city was lost. Alexander marched his army over it, and Xenophon his ten thousand, and ancient historians, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus and Ptolemy, traversed the plain, and hundreds of travelers later, and learned nothing of the ruins so deeply buried beneath their feet. But in our own time temples and palaces are being brought to light, sculptures and pictures and libraries exhumed, and the museums of the world are receiving rich treasures from long-buried Nineveh. On the clay tablets of Nineveh are found records of the kings of Israel and Judah, Ahaz and Jehu, Hezekiah and Manasseh. The latter reigned after the prophet Nahum had ended his career, and almost to the time when his prophecy of the fall of Nineveh was fulfilled.

Ezekiel, in chapters xvi., xvii., xviii., describes the glory and the downfall of Tyre. He saw her destruction, by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, near at hand. The city was taken after thirteen years' siege—but the conqueror grasped an empty shell, for the riches of Tyre were transported to an island near by, where the great queen of commerce rose in splendor; but other and more successful

spoilers were seen in the distance. Alexander afterwards used all the material of the old city, which he threw into the sea to make a causeway to the new, which he captured and burned according to the prophecy of Zechariah, ix. 3, 4. "Tyrus did build herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire." Even after its destruction by Alexander, the city of Tyre, within a few years, rose to considerable importance. It was taken by Antigonus after fourteen months' siege. It afterwards fell successively under the control of Syria, Egypt, the Romans, the Saracens, the Crusaders, until it was utterly destroyed by the Mamelukes, A.D. 1289. A coast of bare rocks and barren sands, with a few fishermen's huts, now mark the place of ancient Tyre.

The whole view of her future and her desolation, as at present, seems to have appeared in the vision of Ezekiel. "The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also

scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and it shall become a spoil to the nations." (Ezekiel xxvi. 1-5.)

The accounts which ancient historians have left us of Egypt bring before us a vision more splendid than the dreams of romance. The time of Menes is fixed at 4,700 years before Christ. His tomb has been discovered in our time and the story of his reign verified. For more than four thousand years one of the highest types of ancient civilization flourished in the valley of the Nile. The whole valley is to-day a treasure house of wonders. It is estimated that more than seven hundred million mummies are buried here—kings with their royal jewels, and tablets telling of their deeds, the rich, with costly vessels and ornaments, which reveal to what height art had attained. The ruins of temples, the obelisks, and rock-hewn tombs, the colossal statues, the pyramids, the inscriptions, which abound in this now desolate land, assure us that the story of her fruitfulness and wealth, her learning and art, and her thousand cities, was no fiction. Egypt was in her splendor in the days of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and had recorded more than three thousand years of prosperous history. But Isaiah and Ezekiel proclaimed her doom. Invasion and conquest were possible, but what these prophets foretold seemed most incredible—the fall of all greatness in the valley of the Nile, and steril-

ity and death where life and luxury so long had reigned. Pharaoh is likened to the cedar of Lebanon, and these are some of his descriptions as given in the thirty-first chapter of Ezekiel: "Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude, Whom art thou like in thy greatness? The waters made him great, the deep set him on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters. I have driven him out for his wickedness. Thou shalt lie in the midst of them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God."

Isaiah prophesied (chapter xix. 5-7): "The waters shall fail from the sea, and the rivers shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up; the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and everything sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more."

Ages of oppression which have discouraged industry and degraded the people, and the ever-encroaching sands of the desert, have made Egypt for the most part poor and destitute. The ancient streams of the Nile, the irrigation canals, ceased

ages ago. The desert has buried many a realm once fruitful. The Egypt that was can never appear again. The land itself is smitten, and turned to a desolation. Keith says: "Over the greater part of Egypt desolation has done its perfect work. The streams of the Nile are now circumscribed within narrow limits to what they formerly were. On the western side of Egypt, as seen in Heath's plan of Egypt, an ancient bed of the river Nile now dry, and called by the natives Bellomah, is distant eighty miles from the nearest branch of that river. The intermediate space, of greater length than breadth, is marked as immense sandy plains, and a long canal which partly intersected it is now dry, except at the time of inundation. Along the seacoast the land is level and destitute of trees; and on the eastern side of Egypt the Pelusian branch of the Nile is choked up, and the plain in which it flowed, except in a few stagnant pools, is undistinguished from the sandy desert which now surrounds it on every side. In the intermediate space, and even within the far narrower limits now occupied by the stream of the Nile, the dry lines of rivers and canals are to be seen, and the desert covers many extensive regions which once raised Egypt among the chief of the kingdoms. With the exception of the environs of Rosetta and Damietta, and a few miserable villages, in traversing the once rich Delta of Egypt from one side to another, the traveler passes through a desert."

The ruins of Egypt's ancient cities seem to have the prophecy of Ezekiel written upon them: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph (Memphis); and I will make Pathros (Southern Egypt) desolate, and will set fire in Zoan (Tanis), and I will execute judgment in No (Thebes); and will pour my fury upon Sin (Pelusium), the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and Noph shall have distresses daily. The young men of Aven (Heliopolis) and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her. Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt; and they shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezekiel xxx. 13-19.)

Respecting the rule over Egypt, the prophets indicate that it will continue under the hand of strangers. "I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers." (Ezekiel xxx. 12.) "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." (Ezekiel xxx. 13.) "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations." (Ezekiel xxix. 15.)

Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians three hundred and fifty years before Christ. It was afterwards subdued by the Macedonians and

governed by the Ptolemies for the space of two hundred and ninety-four years, when it became a province of the Roman empire B.C. 30. In A.D. 641 it fell under control of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers and seized the authority of Egypt. "A mode of government the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority from being a stranger and a slave. No son of a former ruler, and no native of Egypt, could succeed to the sovereignty; but a chief chosen from a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages every effort to emancipate the country or to create a prince of the land of Egypt has proved abortive, and has been fatal to the aspirant." Thus the prophecy concerning Egypt, most singular in character both as to the country and its government, has had a most striking and singular fulfillment. Ancient Egypt is to us to-day a romantic dream, a ceaseless wonder. Its ruins fully attest the story of its mighty past. To the stranger who comes to view her desolation, the Nile murmurs a sad requiem of the splendor that has faded:

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave, mighty thought threading a dream;
And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—

Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mighty silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
The oppressive void weighs on us, and we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

More than any other city, Babylon represented to the mind of the Hebrew prophet the sum of iniquity, in its apostasy from the earliest revelations of divine truth, its sensuality and pride, and its oppression of the nations. Babylon is always reckoned the most wonderful city ever built by man, the highest expression of human pride and power. The vast plain of Chaldea, by which the city was sustained, was, for thousands of years, the garden of the world, unsurpassed by Egypt. Indeed, it is now understood that the wonderful civilization which sprang up on the banks of the Nile was introduced by Menes from the valley between the Euphrates and Tigris. On a parallel with the prophecy concerning Egypt, but still more wonderful, is that which foretold the fall of Babylon and the desolation of all Babylonia. It was full one hundred and sixty years before Babylon received the first blow to her power that Isaiah proclaimed her doom.

That first blow was dealt by Cyrus, who is now proved, by tablets lately discovered in Babylon itself, to have been first the king of Elam, the

mountainous country separating Persia from Babylonia. He afterwards obtained dominion over Persia and Libya. It is worthy of note that Isaiah, chapter xxi. 2, only speaks of the Elamites and Medes as taking the city of Babylon. The story of the siege of Babylon, and the entrance of Cyrus's army by the bed of the Euphrates after the water had been turned into a canal, is now in measure discredited. There has been discovered the record which Cyrus caused to be made of the taking of the city. No description of the manner of its capture is given, save the statement that Gobryas, one of his generals, entered the city without fighting, on the sixteenth day of the month Tammuz. This confirms the story told in the book of Daniel, of Belshazzar's feast, and the taking of the city on that night when the court was given up to wild festivity; for the feast of Tammuz was, with the Babylonians, the greatest bacchanalian revel of the year. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." (Isa. xlv. 1.) "The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds: their might hath failed; they became as women." (Jer. li. 30.)

This mention of the name of Cyrus the conqueror is one of the most remarkable circumstances in prophetic writings. Also the gates were opened before Cyrus's army as history records, and

his soldiers entered the city, and even the palace inclosure, without resistance. Another fact, which lately discovered Babylonian tablets reveal, is that Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus, and reigned conjointly with him. He was slain at the gate of the palace on this feast night, as related in the book of Daniel.

The city of Babylon and all Babylonia sank into ruin slowly through a succession of centuries. As respected the final desolation of Babylon, Isaiah drew this picture: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But the wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." (Isa. xiii. 19-22.)

There could be no more perfect picture of the ruins of Babylon as they are to-day, and as they have been for many centuries, than this language of the prophet. Dens of hyenas and jackals abound, owls and bats occupy the cavities of the ruins, scorpions and serpents abound; the Arab deems the place haunted by evil spirits, and will

not spread his tent within its precincts. "Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate." (Jer. l. 13.) Keppel, speaking of his visit to Babylon, says: "The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited." "Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in time of harvest." (Jer. l. 16.) "On this part of the plain, both where traces of buildings were left and where none had stood, all seemed equally naked of vegetation." (Porter's Travels, vol. ii., page 302.) "I will make thee a burnt mountain." (Jer. li. 25.) "Birs Nimroud presents the appearance of a circular hill. It is strewn over with petrified and vitrified substances. On the summit are immense fragments of brickwork, of no determinate figure, tumbled together and converted into solid vitrified masses."

Upon the whole land of Chaldea the prophets denounced barrenness and desolation. The predictions to this effect are many and full, and they furnish a complete description of that once fruitful realm as it is to-day. "And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant." (Jer. li. 29.) Sir R. K. Porter, in his travels, says of the country around Babylon: "The abundance of the country had vanished as clean away as if the besom of destruction had swept it from north

to south; the whole land, from the outskirts of Babylon to the farthest stretch of sight, lying a melancholy waste. Not a habitable spot appears for countless miles."

When these cities stood in their glory and strength, the prophecies which doomed them were uttered. The circumstances which should attend their fall passed in panoramic vision before the prophet's mind. Their after desolations through the slow-passing centuries were seen. The graphic portrayal of all this, the prophet drew from vision in which the fate of cities and empires was boldly outlined.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Chastisements of God's People.

From the standpoint of patriotism, it is not strange that the Hebrew prophets should have denounced judgments upon those nations and cities which they judged their foes. From the standpoint of religious faith and zeal, it is not strange that they declared that idolatry and false religions should fall before the revelations of their Jehovah God, and that the only true God should at last reduce the world under his sway. But patriotism could never have predicted the overthrow of the Jewish state, the holy city, the temple, the solemn Mosaic rituals, and the rejection, as a nation, of God's covenant people. And if religious faith prompted such utterances, triumphing over all human motives, and moving the prophets in their religious zeal to hold steadily in view the progress, not of temporal powers but of spiritual forces, not the perpetuation of outward forms but the divine reign in human hearts, then this same religious faith and zeal must appear to us an inspiration from God. Its utterances must be confessed to be true in spirit and aim to a divine purpose, which the prophets clearly saw and by which they were controlled.

But from whatever motives the prophecies may have proceeded, the fact of their fulfillment is the

prophet's vindication when he claims inspiration, saying, "Thus saith the Lord God." When prophecy turns out to be forewritten history, it can neither be regarded as representing human prescience nor the impulses of human passion or pride. When it is found that the Hebrew prophets, who committed themselves so positively and unreservedly over a field as broad as the then peopled world, and for a time reaching through millenniums of years, yet spake the truth, their visions can only be regarded as the revelations of the Omniscient.

Paul represents that the common people among the Jews were dazzled by the glory of the Mosaic dispensation, and could not grasp fully the truth that it should pass away. This obscuration of the new dispensation glory was symbolized in the veil spread over Moses's face. It was this spiritual glory which Moses foresaw that lighted his face, because he steadfastly looked to the end of the very things which he was then establishing, but the people were not ready for that vision. Yet, had they been able to look steadfastly on the glory of the first dispensation, they would have anticipated the second. "Seeing then that we have such hope," says Paul, "we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, who put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading

of the old testament; which veil is taken away in Christ." (2 Cor. iii. 12-14.)

But Moses saw the coming glory, and saw as clearly, and foretold, the night which should close the dispensation which he opened.

While the hosts of Israel stood in sight of the promised land, Moses, in his last instruction and charge, set forth the close of their national history, depicting with historical clearness and terrible fidelity events which, at that time, tarried behind the procession of fifteen hundred years. It was not by Egypt or Assyria or Babylon that Israel should fall, but by a power which had not yet risen upon the horizon of history, and which should arise in a land as yet unknown. The characteristics of the Roman people are strikingly portrayed. "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young: and he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land." (Deut. xxviii. 49-52.)

For a brief summary of facts in the fulfillment

of this prophecy, we quote from Dr. Alexander Keith: "Each particular in this prophecy, though it be only introductory to others, has met its full completion. The remote situation of the Romans, the rapidity of their march, the very emblems of their arms, their unknown language and warlike appearance, the indiscriminate cruelty, and unsparing pillage which they exercised toward the persons and property of the Jews, could scarcely have been presented in more descriptive terms. Vespasian, Adriah, and Julius Severus removed with part of their armies from Britain to Palestine, the extreme points of the Roman world. The eagle was the standard of their armies, and the utmost activity and expedition were displayed in the reduction of Judea. They were a nation of fierce countenance, a race distinct from the effeminate Asiatic troops. At Gadara and Gamala, throughout many parts of the Roman empire, and in repeated instances at Jerusalem itself, the slaughter of the Jews was indiscriminate without distinction of age or sex. Through all the land of Judea every city was besieged and taken, and their high and fenced walls raised to their foundations."

Moses draws a picture of horrors which were fully realized in the siege of Jerusalem, when famine had rooted out natural affection and supplanted even parental tenderness with fierceness and despair. For it is true, as Josephus relates, that women even ate their own children in that awful crisis. "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine

own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, . . . in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: so that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eyes shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one, . . . and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee within thy gates." (Deut. xxviii. 53-57.)

The prophecy of Jesus of Nazareth in regard to the overthrow of Jerusalem we have already noticed in chapter x., in connection with our argument for the production of the Gospels in apostolic times. If these utterances attributed to Jesus were before the events which Josephus records in his history of the siege of Jerusalem, their fullness and force as divine revelations are most manifest. While we think the proof that these predictions were uttered by Jesus, as the evangelists assert, is

quite sufficient, there is a consideration to reënforce this argument in the prophecies of our Lord concerning the after history of the Jewish people, and the experiences which his own followers should encounter. As respects the Jews, he said: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke xxi. 24.) Of similar import is Jesus' lamentation over Jerusalem: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii. 38, 39.) The treading down of Jerusalem and the wide, long wandering of her children, as seen to-day, are in fulfillment of these words uttered, as none dispute, near two thousand years ago. Indeed, there is no more striking fulfillment of prophecy possible to be demanded than that which has been held before the world for more than eighteen centuries of Jewish history leading up to our time, and in the condition of the Jewish people to-day.

In the prophecies concerning the afflictions of the Jews we must note not merely the faithful picture which the prophets give of their fearful and prolonged judgments, but the promise also of deliverance at last, as a thing which the covenant relation of Israel and the revealed purpose of God make sure. The "until" of Jesus' predictions is a prophecy of restoration—"*until* the time of the

Gentiles be fulfilled," "*until* ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." We shall find this same "until" in all the woes which the prophets denounce upon Israel.

The condition of the Jews after the overthrow of their state was graphically described by Moses —their wide dispersion, their prolonged affliction, and their reproach. Though his predictions of calamity were fulfilled in every scourging which God visited upon them for their sins during their national existence, there are pictures of distress only realized after the people were scattered over all the earth. "And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind." (Deut. xxviii. 63-65.) "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God." (Lev. xxvi. 44).

Eight hundred years after Moses, Jeremiah prophesied at length, and with much detail, the dis-

persion of the Jews. Although the Babylonish captivity was even then begun, and much of Jeremiah's prophecy had reference to afflictions at hand, still there appears constantly a further reach in his visions, and conditions are constantly described which have been more completely fulfilled since the overthrow of Jerusalem and the Jewish state by the Romans. Indeed, what Jeremiah said in his own day was the beginning of the dispersion. The ten tribes were already gone into captivity from which they never returned, nor did all of Judah and Benjamin, or even the greater part of them, ever return from the captivity in Babylon. What Jeremiah saw was the dispersion, and the weary centuries of sorrow which lay before his people. "I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them." (Jer. xxiv. 9.) "And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them." (Jer. xxix. 18.)

We might fill page upon page with such prophecies concerning the Jewish people, but those given indicate fairly their trend and tone.

The idea of a spiritual seed, a faithful remnant in whom the purposes of God shall be revealed, is a thought always present with the prophets. "I will

scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them. And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries. But I will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezekiel xii. 14-16.) "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord." (Amos ix. 8, 9.) "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." (Jer. xxx. 11.) Whether they contemplated storms near at hand, or storms which lowered through long centuries to come, the prophets still saw light beyond —the light of an approaching kingdom, the reign of heavenly glory. Thus in connection with his glowing prophecy concerning the Righteous Branch—the Rod out of the stem of Jesse—in that day when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid," the prophet declares the outcasts of Jacob shall be gathered under Messiah's reign. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the

people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, who shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isa. xi. 10-12.)

Jerusalem and Babylon were used by the prophets as symbols of good and evil—the cause of God and all which opposes his cause. Jerusalem, the capital city of God's chosen people, the center from which divine revelation was to go forth to the world, stood for God's purpose to save the world. Babylon, the first city to bring down upon the post-diluvians the judgments of heaven, from whose influence Abraham had gone out into a wilderness to rescue his seed from apostasy; Babylon, proud, imperious, sensual, the constant menace of Israel, was the chosen objective representation of false religion and sin. The dispensations of Providence toward these two cities cast the light of divine revelation through all the future. Jerusalem, scourged as no other city in the history of the world, is still preserved, and waits her deliverance under the covenant promise of God. Babylon is fallen forever, and made an eternal desolation. So shall God chastise and purify his Church, and

so shall she triumph at last. The consummation was revealed to John upon Patmos when he saw the New Jerusalem purged from all her stains, delivered from all her foes, and heard the cry, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!"

History has been faithful to such prophecy. The kingdom of heaven advances apace. The consummation may be far off. But none can doubt that righteousness and truth are strengthening their sway over the human mind, and that they will triumph at last.

CHAPTER XV.

Messianic Prophecies.

Whether we receive the Bible as a revelation from God or not, we cannot deny that it teaches a religion, the general scheme of which is the salvation of our race. The account which it gives of creation is not for the purpose of history, save to introduce man upon the stage. It is man, in his relation to God, and God's purpose concerning man, which are always uppermost in the thoughts of the authors of the Bible, whether they write law or history, prophecy or precepts.

Having presented man as the direct creation of the divine hand, the author of Genesis gives us at once the story of the fall, and, upon the basis of man's corrupted nature and his estrangement from God, divine providence and purpose are represented as conducting a scheme for his deliverance from evil powers, and the full establishment of divine law over his will and life. This consummation was, as we have shown, the ideal of the theocracy, which the prophets saw and foretold was not to be realized by any mere doctrines or sacraments, or any organizations of government, but by the ascendency of spiritual truth over the minds of men and divine influence renewing their moral natures. They saw, also, that these two agencies, "grace and truth," must work together. For man, in the

attainment of holiness, cannot go beyond his conception of it. Therefore, they foretold that the old dispensation must give place to one of clearer light and larger spiritual power. This new era in the history of the race would be ushered in by the coming of the Lord's Anointed, whose dominion should be "everlasting," whom all nations should call "blessed," and whose laws should be written in the hearts of men.

Having noticed that the general trend of prophecy is to such a goal, we ask to set before the reader certain specific prophecies relating to the world's Redeemer.

The first Messianic prophecy—as we believe is rightly claimed by Bible expositors—is in the doom which God is represented as pronouncing upon the serpent, at the time of man's first sin. The doom which was to come upon the tempter as the enemy of God and man is pronounced in Genesis iii. 15: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Whether we interpret the story of the garden, the trees, and the serpent allegorically or literally, it matters not, as the same general truths concerning the moral history and state of our race are set forth in either case, and the doom of the serpent can only mean triumph over evil, gained by the seed of the woman. It will not be an easy triumph. The serpent shall afflict with a temporary affliction the seed of the woman, but shall meet ultimate de-

struction. The bruising, respectively, of head and heel shall be the result of the enmity between the "woman's seed" and the seducer.

That which strikes us most in this prophecy is the position assigned the woman as representative of the race. This is against all general usage, and against all Scripture usage elsewhere. This singular form of statement seems designed to point out a singular genesis of the promised deliverer as being preëminently the seed of the woman.

The next prophecy bearing on our subject is in Genesis ix. 24-27: "And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Canaan, Ham's son, is here representative of all the Hamitic races, and this prophecy of Noah foreshadowed the future of the three great branches of the human family which should descend from his three sons. To the descendants of Ham is decreed a menial place among the nations. To his brethren, the people of his own race, he should be the most degraded drudge—"a servant of servants." To the Semitic and Japhetic races also he should be in bondage. It is not sound reason which justifies slavery on the ground of this prophecy, for then must we acquit men of responsibility in every evil

thing which it was foretold they would do—the Canaanites, for the increasing sin which filled up their cup of guilt and led to their doom; the Jews, for the apostasy which sent them into captivity. Noah only saw and foretold, in general terms, the characteristics of the people who should rule the world in the future.

It needs no space here to show how the children of Ham have been servants through the ages; nor need we detail the history of the wonderful enlargement of Japheth, from the Persians, through Greeks, Romans, Germans, Scandinavians, Russians, French, Spaniards, Italians, English, and Americans, to that wide dominion which they now hold. They have long been the ruling people of the world, and their enlargement was never so rapid as to-day, in any previous age of the world's history.

Shem was to teach religion. The Lord God—the Jehovah God—of Shem should be blessed by the world, and the descendants of Japheth should take their religion from the Semites; for this is the meaning of the phrase, "He shall dwell in the tents of Shem"—not as a conqueror, but as a pupil, coming to the tents of Shem to secure instruction. The symbol is of peace, and not of war.

We pass to the covenant with Abraham (Gen. xii. 1-3). Here we have the distinct promise to the patriarch: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Here is the calling out of one chosen to be a conspicuous actor in a world-wide

scheme—a scheme of blessing. But it was not in his own character alone, or chiefly, that Abraham was to bless the world. The blessing should come through his descendants, for so was the promise: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xxii. 18.) When he received this promise Abraham was old and childless. It is in striking proof of the special providence of Jehovah, guiding the after history of the Israelites, as they claimed that, although Abraham, after receiving this promise, became the father of eight sons—one of Hager, and six of Keturah, besides Isaac, of Sarah—the covenant line was through Isaac alone. There is no explanation to give for the wide departure from the patriarch's religion on the part of the Ishmaelites and the sons of Keturah, as compared with the direct continuance and development of it through Isaac and his seed, but the direct care of Jehovah and special providential direction. The promise passed from Abraham to Isaac: "I will perform the oath which I sware to Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xxvi. 3, 4.)

Isaac had two sons, but Jacob was chosen to stand in the covenant line; and we observe again the same clearly marked providence distinguishing between the descendants of Jacob and Esau which

we noticed in the case of Isaac as compared with the other sons of Abraham.

But although Jacob had twelve sons, none of them were cut off from the privileges of the covenant, and all their posterity were reckoned with the peculiar people of God; but there was again a prophetic utterance to mark the tribe of which the promised seed should come: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. xlix. 10.)

The claim that Shiloh here refers to the place where the ark rested first, after the Israelites entered Canaan, is not supported either by the grammatical construction of the text or by the facts of history. As to the history, Judah had no acknowledged leadership during the time of the exodus, nor afterwards, until David, of the tribe of Judah, was anointed king. Even the first king of Israel—Saul—was a Benjamite. As to the grammatical construction, "until Shiloh come" is the only rendering of the passage which is at all admissible. But as this is the only place where the title Shiloh is given to the promised Messiah, there has been some doubt whether the word here should be simply rendered "rest," which is its meaning, or taken as a concrete noun and so rendered "rest-giver." Gesenius, who first held the latter view, afterwards changed to the former, and so would translate the passage, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his

feet, until rest shall come, and the nations obey him" (Judah). This, however, does not change the Messianic reference of the text according to Gesenius, for this is his comment upon it: "Judah shall not lay aside the scepter of a leader until he shall have subdued his enemies and obtained dominion over many nations; referring to the expected kingdom of Messiah, who was to spring from the tribe of Judah." "Others," he says, "whom I formerly followed, take 'Shiloh' here as a concrete, *i. e.*, 'pacificator,' 'Prince of peace.' Understanding either the Messiah or Solomon."

The Hebrew lexicographer, Parkhurst, is very definite in his view of the passage. "The word," he says, "is a title of Messiah, as the three Chaldee Targums rightly explain it: that of Onkelos by 'Messiah,' and those of Jerusalem and of Jonathan Ben-Uziel by 'the King Messiah.' "

The passages referred to by Parkhurst will be more satisfactory to the reader when fully quoted; we therefore give them as follows: Targum of Onkelos, "Until Messiah come, whose is the kingdom"; Jerusalem Targum, "Until the time that the King Messiah shall come, whose is the kingdom." The Babylonian Talmud has: "What is the name of Messiah? His name is Shiloh, for it is written, Until Shiloh come."

According to both Jewish and Christian interpretation, this passage from Genesis xlix. 10 points to the Redeemer, and foretells his birth of the tribe of Judah. It decrees to Judah supremacy among

the tribes of Israel, down to the appearance of the great spiritual King, in whom should be fulfilled the covenant which promised blessing to all the world through the seed of Abraham. We may well pause a moment upon this prophecy to note how wonderful have been the circumstances of its fulfillment. It decreed to the tribe of Judah, as we have suggested, a national existence till the coming of Shiloh.

It was full six hundred years after the death of Jacob when the tribes desired a king, and Samuel anointed Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, to rule the people. Thus it seemed, in the beginning, as if Jacob's prophecy would fall to the ground. Saul himself understood that dominion in Israel did not pertain to his tribe, for he said to Samuel: "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the tribes of Benjamin? Wherefore, then, speakest thou so to me?"

But it was soon revealed that dominion in Israel pertained not to Benjamin; for while Saul yet reigned, Samuel, by divine direction, anointed David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, to be king.

After the death of Solomon, ten tribes broke off, following Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim, who with them established the northern kingdom, afterwards known as the kingdom of Israel. But Judah and Benjamin remained in allegiance to Jeroboam, Solomon's son. The tribe of Judah gave

name to the southern kingdom of Judah, in distinction from the kingdom of Israel.

After two hundred and forty-five years the kingdom of Israel was conquered by Shalmaneser, and her people carried away into the kingdom of Media, from which dispersion they never returned, and are now referred to as "the lost tribes." Judah remained one hundred and forty-two years later, when they were carried captive to Babylon. But the tribe of Judah did not then lose its autonomy. This can be more easily understood when it is remembered that the laws of the Jews were all of a religious character, and their autonomy was preserved in their religious observances. It was this bond of union, and this internal organization which furnished the ground of Haman's fears, when he appealed to the king for the destruction of this peculiar people. His argument was: "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them." (Esther iii. 8.)

The autonomy which held the Jews together was of such a nature that it could be dissolved only by their extermination, or very wide dispersion. To this fact we must also add, that Daniel, of the seed royal, was even a ruler in Babylon. "Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and

made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom." (Dan. v. 29.)

After seventy years Judah returned to Jerusalem, while there yet remained among the people some who had been carried away in their youth. Judah remained a kingdom till the birth of Jesus of Nazareth; for, under the Roman rule, the autonomy of the kingdom was continued, and Judea was ruled as a viceroyalty under Herod the Great.

Thus Judah continued to have a name among the nations till Shiloh came—Jesus of Nazareth, the promised "Peace-giver."

According to the general view of the covenant and the theocracy set forth by the prophets, Judah's dominion should not cease at the coming of Shiloh, but only be consummated in that spiritual and universal dominion which the Lion of the tribe of Judah should attain. The people should be gathered to Shiloh—the King who should unite the world under his sway. In allusion to his name as "the Rest-giver," Isaiah afterwards said: "Unto him shall the Genties seek; and his rest shall be glorious." (Isa. xi. 10.)

The next prophecy which we notice regarding the descent of Messiah points out the particular family to which he should belong. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and

might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. xi. 1-9.)

Of the many sons of Jesse the prophet also names David as standing in the line of the promised Deliverer: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon

the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." (Isa. ix. 6, 7.)

We have quoted these prophecies at length, because they not only point out the line of Messiah's descent, but in unmistakable terms depict his character and spiritual reign, bearing us quite away from any achievements of temporal power or glory of temporal rule.

Prophecy designates the place where the Christ should be born: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Micah v. 2.)

Haggai incited his people to build the sacred temple, assuring them that the Messiah should appear in it: "And I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." (Hag. ii. 7.) Malachi also prophesied that the Christ should appear in the temple, and that his coming should be heralded by a special messenger: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in;

behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. iii. 1.)

No temporal ruler was Messiah to be. His own nation should reject him and put him to death. Here we must put in evidence the whole fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Note especially such passages as: "We hid as it were our faces from him"; "He was despised, and we esteemed him not"; "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

The victory which Messiah should win was to be spiritual, and achieved through his death. Beyond the scenes of his suffering, his rejection, and the pouring out his soul unto death, he should "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors."

Thus have we seen from the beginning of the sacred record, and throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, a line of prophecies, very peculiar in their character, and which were wonderfully fulfilled in Jesus Christ. His tribe, the place of his birth, and the time of his birth, as marked by certain attendant historic facts, are all clearly pointed out. But, above all, the very extraordinary character of him who was the subject of these prophecies is faithfully set forth—the King who should

set up a kingdom diverse from all kingdoms, whose dominion should be reached through death and should abide forever.

The fulfillment of these predictions in the Man of Nazareth is too plain to be questioned; and there are many more prophecies bearing as strongly upon the same subject and demanding the same conclusion. Indeed, we have here the very heart of the Jewish religion, the spiritual goal toward which it was always directing the faith of the people. The whole history of the Jewish nation, and their entire religious scheme, the significance of the covenant, the character of their Jehovah God as the loving Father of all humanity, and their ideal of his final reign over all the nations, were constant prophecies of such a consummation as the setting up of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The prophets of the Old Testament, no less than the apostles of Jesus, are at the foundation of the Christian system, Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

CHAPTER XVI.

Divine Incarnation.

According to the Bible, the true religion began to be taught by direct revelations from God more than two thousand years before the Bible itself began to be written. The fact, therefore, that records are found to-day, upon tablets and cylinders exhumed from the ruins of the cities of ancient Babylonia, long antedating the time of Moses, and containing traditions which closely parallel the Mosaic record, is only such confirmation as that record demands for itself. According to the Bible, the doctrines of the true religion were never confined to the Bible, or to those who held, in this form, the oracles of God.

That monotheism was the prevailing faith in the earliest ages of human history is now abundantly proved. The false religions of the world show evidence of corruption from a better original, and justify Paul's charge upon the heathen, that "when they knew God they glorified him not as God."

But as the center of the scheme of revealed religion is the redemption of man by a Saviour, to be manifested "in the fullness of times," it is only to be expected that some ideas of such a redemption should show themselves in the systems of heathen religion.

The idea of divine incarnation is not peculiar to the Christian religion. Mithras and Zoroaster were God-men in heathen faith. Tohe was a God-man among the Chinese, Osiris among the Egyptians, Malicerta among the Phœnicians, Hobal of the Arabs, Khan of the Tartars, Apollo of the Greeks, Vishnu of the Hindoos; and many other like deities of other peoples might we mention.

When St. John wrote in his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; all things were made by him," he used the terms and the thoughts of Plato, accepting first a philosophical conception of that truth which he meant presently to set forth in concrete expression. He would also give to the general idea of divine manifestation, however vague and unsatisfactory in the conceptions of human reason, the significance which belonged to it as a doctrine of the race, demanded by the conscious needs of the race.

The *Word* is the medium of revelation. By the *Logos*, the Greek philosopher sought to express the idea of divine intelligence going forth in an intelligent creation, and the divine will in executive functions. Thought is embodied, will revealed, purpose expressed in the Word. The manifestation of the Infinite and Absolute was the going forth of the Word. Thus were all finite and conditioned things brought into existence. Such a thought must have been in the mind of Moses,

when, describing the creation, his constant form of statement was, "And God said."

But a medium of divine revelation through which man might hold intelligent communion with a personal God philosophy could never find. The clearest-sighted thinker lost his way amid the shadows, and the most devout soul heard only inexplicable whispers. Even philosophy, at the end of its struggles, confessed that the world's hope was just that which religion, in all its systems, had in some sort accepted; that God must send a Mediator to men that they might be brought into satisfactory experimental relations with himself.

"Men," says Mackay, "cannot worship a mere abstraction; they require some outward form in which to clothe their conceptions and enlist their sympathies." When St. John, therefore, passes from abstractions to living realities, and proceeds to write, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," he only declares a fact which was needed to fulfill a confessed want of all humanity.

Divine incarnation may be regarded as a doctrine of essential theology—a hope of the human heart, which any system of religion must fulfill, before it can fully commend itself to human intelligence as a perfect and final revelation of God to

fallen men. The doctrine of a divine revelation is not satisfactory if it fall short of God manifest in the flesh.

Even heathen thought generally conceived that the Mediator between God and man must be a being God-begotten, woman-born. Only through a being who touches alike the divine and human nature can there be perfect mediation. He must know the will of God, and for our teaching accomplish the will of God in human spheres. He must, through the warmth and sympathy of human life, commend the divine love to us. Through flesh and blood he must teach us how flesh and blood are to be sanctified by the indwelling Deity. The Son of God must teach us how to become the sons of God. We must be shown how humanity comes to perfection only in vital union with God. The condition of such vital union must be supplied in one who approaches us in such a manner, in human spheres, that we may know him, beyond dream or fancy, and knowing him be assured that we know the Father also, and loving him know that we love God and are reconciled to him.

The heathen, in the thought of divine meditation, had a grasp upon vital truth. They did not follow a false faith, but among all the characters whom they deified as mediators between man and God they found none which fulfilled their hopes. A vague poetic conception of mediation was all that could be attributed to such characters. Their

mediators served the purposes of sentiment and fancy, and not the needs of life—a need confessed but unsatisfied is all we see in the mediators of heathen systems, just as still appears, where the gospel of the grace of God is not preached, in those who, clinging to hope, wait the return of Vishnu, of Buddha, or Montezuma.

Closely allied to the idea of mediation is that of atonement. All systems of religion are efforts to regain, for man, right relations to his Maker; and the sense of his fallen and estranged state and nature is at the bottom of all. For the recovery of right relations to God, more is needed than the perfect knowledge of God's will. Man has not strength to walk in the straight path, though it be opened before him. A sinful nature and numberless transgressions in past life bar approach to God. There must be forgiveness and a moral change. Here was the deepest problem of religion. In this regard, as in respect to a mediator, heathen religions confessed a need and expressed a hope, but found no fulfillment of that hope.

The Bible teaches that the idea of atonement for man's sin through the blood of a slain victim, was held by the first children of a fallen race. It was this idea, its confessed guilt and need of redemption, that made Abel's offering of the Lamb slain acceptable to God, rather than the offering of Cain, which expressed only thankfulness for the gifts of Nature. The fact stands before us that from the

earliest history of our race the offering of blood sacrifices has been regarded as an essential element of religion.

We have said that these offerings from the first, and down through all religious cults, confessed a need and expressed a hope. There is little more to be said of the sin offering under the Mosaic dispensation. No definite interpretation of the symbol seems to have been given, and the redemption to which it pointed was vaguely apprehended by the worshiper. Interpreting the sacrifice out of his own heart, the worshiper discerned two things to be set forth as essential: the offering of a pure life, and devotion unto death. The idea of a penalty to divine justice was in different ages more or less prominent as God's justice or love suggested the interpretation of the symbol. But of the sacrifice it is to be noted that the idea of suffering was not emphasized, as if God delighted in torture. The animal for the sacrifice was slain without torture and in the easiest way. It is not suggested that the dying of the victim, in itself, made atonement. The blood was used as the atoning symbol. The victim was slain to obtain the blood: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.) The blood was the symbol of life. This blood was poured out at the foot of the altar as the expression

of a life devotion. With the idea of dying, because of sin, was linked that of a pure life, offering itself in love to God. Instead of the worshiper thinking of relief from sin, simply because an innocent creature had died as the victim of that sin, the ceremony impressed him more deeply of the need of purity and a consecrated life. There were no antinomian suggestions in the Jewish ritual—no suggestion of deliverance from sin by bare substitution of a victim in man's stead.

The view of atonement which represents it as a penalty merely to divine justice, the paying down of so much suffering to cancel so much sin, is too gross a form of statement to represent fairly the principles involved. If the idea of simple substitution be accepted, or the payment of a debt, no place remains for repentance, faith, or holy living, as essential to salvation. If the debt is paid, the sinner shall never pay it. Lack of faith that it is paid may cloud his mind here, but the fact stands, nevertheless, that the sinner will never have the debt to pay. We are told by defenders of the mere substitution theory that one in prison may have the death sentence canceled, but if he believes it not canceled it is the same as if it were not; and so faith has its use, though it be only to accept a finished salvation. The position is untenable even on that ground. The unbeliever is not in the state of one who is not rescued. If in the sense of strict substitution another has died in his stead, he shall

not die, no matter how much he fears it. If the death sentence is truly canceled, by another, and with no reference to aught he can do, the law in its moral claims is not sustained but annulled. The sinner is free from its claims and its penalties.

There is in the nature of moral government ample ground for using the term "God's wrath" in a metaphorical sense. Sin, under God's moral government, has its penalty. It entails suffering by the very laws which are essential to moral being. From such a standpoint God's wrath toward transgressors cannot be too severely drawn. But it must be ever held in view that vindictive wrath belongs not to God, nor has he any need to uphold authority for his own glory. All his dealings with man have respect to man's good alone, as a good father purposes all things for the welfare of his children. God exacts no tributes from man for himself, and inflicts no penalties upon man to satisfy himself, apart from human good. Again, we cannot think that there is anything in sheer suffering to atone for sin, else sin would work its own cure, and the consequence of sin prove the deliverance from sin at last. But the revelation of a sinless one—God incarnate for us—struggling against sin, even unto death, must give the highest conception both of the terrible nature of sin and the divine love which seeks to rescue man from it. The misery of sin being inevitable in the laws of moral being, to be escaped only by escape from sin itself,

the suffering of a Redeemer is fairly expressed as a penalty to the law, and a suffering of the just for the unjust under the law. But it is the unconquerable love of the Redeemer so revaled that subdues the sinner's heart, inspires repentance and faith, and makes atonement or at-onement an accomplished fact, and an experience of conscious salvation. Unless the heart be won, any revelation of love, any humiliation or suffering, any penalty paid to divine law to win it, is but a provisional salvation, not yet become effectual—an open door, through which man has not yet passed into the kingdom of peace.

Man's salvation is not an inevitable sequence of any view of the plan of redemption. The plan may be unavailing. Human will remains. Human freedom must be preserved inviolate to preserve moral nature. All that divine love can do is to furnish the grounds for a right will.

Such example of love to man, and opposition to sin as will draw him to God, in love and faith, cannot be given by man himself. Whatever moral excellence man may exhibit, his struggle against sin is not, in the highest sense, voluntary. Man has no choice in entering upon this career of trial and pain. He comes into being under the hard conditions of a fallen nature and a sinful world. He enters the field of action because he must, and finds that the devil has already preëmption rights. A battle is to be fought, whether he choose or not.

If, in such a state, man choose to fight for the good and true, his choice is for himself. He is not giving his life to take away the sin of the world, but fighting for his life against the world's sin. And if the sequel of this struggle be to fall under his enemies, and die in ignominy and torture, none could take inspiration or gather hope from such an example. If any revelation be made to man which he may recognize as the outstretched hand of God in his behalf, it cannot come from such a source as this; it cannot be achieved on such a plane as this; it cannot stop at such an end as this. The end is the blackness of despair if no light of immortality may break beyond. Unless man shall see God's own hand reached forth for his salvation, he will not find sufficient ground for hope. Divine incarnation could alone fulfill the hope of the world in its conscious need of a Mediator and Redeemer. Only one who descends from a celestial sphere to take part with man in his struggle against sin, whose love is the love of the Father, whose word is the infallible truth of God, and whose example and teaching lead upon the sure path of victory over sin and death, can be accepted in man's faith as the "Captain of his salvation." Successful struggle against sin involved necessities like these—the God-man, the immaculate life, and the voluntary death—the Redeemer who was from the beginning a part of the divine plan—a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To such a one He-

brew prophecy and rituals clearly pointed, for such a one religion vaguely hoped. The Divine Redeemer was the Desire of all nations.

This revelation of grace and truth was not an arbitrary and unmeaning revelation. It was the scheme of divine wisdom, the perfect philosophy of man's moral nature, and of the laws of moral being under which he stood estranged from God, and, by nature, in spite of divine compassion, "a child of wrath." Man's salvation is only achieved through the atonement in those moral affections and purposes for which the atonement calls. Only he is saved in whom those affections and purposes are inspired. No man can be happy in the being he hates. The call of this display of God's love, which reached its culmination on the cross, is, "I pray you be reconciled to God." This is the gospel message for all time.

CHAPTER XVII.

Jesus of Nazareth an Historic Character.

The course of the world's history had prepared the way for Christianity. The doctrines of essential theology, such as God, more or less understood in respect to his character and will, the fallen state of man, and the need of a mediator to adjust man to right relations toward his Creator, were taught in all religious cults. Special doctrines, which were to play a leading part in the Christian faith, had, also, been stressed in the teachings of heathen philosophy. Socrates and Plato had dealt with the doctrine of man's immortality, and the belief that a future of happiness or misery awaits men beyond death, according as they lead good or evil lives on earth. The Greek and Roman mythologies abounded in pictures of glory or of gloom, representing the state of departed souls. Roman supremacy and toleration opened the way for a universal reform. The prevalence of the Greek language furnished the vehicle for world-wide teaching. The marvelous events of Jewish history had attracted the attention of learned men of all nations to the claims of "the peculiar people," and made them expectant of the fulfillment of Jewish prophecies, which foretold the appearance of the God-man, and set forth

the spiritual character and universality of his reign. Under these conditions came forth One, who deliberately placed himself in the focus of Jewish prophecy and of the common faith of the world, and challenged all men to test his claim as the Son of God and the world's Redeemer. Claiming God as his Father, he said: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not."

Jesus of Nazareth is no myth. He stands far apart from all the demigods of mythology. They were creations of fancy, wholly, or characters which fancy, prompted by the religious principle, had built up from traditionary heroes. They were received by the people as poetic fictions, embodying the sentiments, hopes, and wants of man's spiritual nature. Their most earnest devotees were led only by vague longings:

> Like children crying in the night;
> Like children crying for a light.
> And with no language but a cry.

Nevertheless, these creations served Christianity in illustrating what the highest human genius could do in shaping, even in the realms of the ideal, a character that might represent the Saviour of men. They add proofs that no human mind could have created such a character as is set before us by the evangelists. But of this, more hereafter.

Jesus of Nazareth is not a myth. Mythology works upon shadowy forms, which it hides far from the open day of man's common life. In re-

mote ages it seeks its scenes and gathers its materials. It retires from the tests of the senses. It speaks vaguely, with oracular voice. Jesus is an historic character. The time and place of his birth are known. He came forth upon a conspicuous stage, before a theater crowded with keen spectators. It was the age of Cæsar Augustus, Horace, Virgil, Livy, Tacitus, Sallust, Cicero. His theater was the sphere of daily life. He was an actor in the light of day, in the presence of thousands, and in such spheres as challenged the judgment of men and appealed to the faith of men. He was no recluse. No awe of unapproachableness held men at a distance from him. In the sphere of common wants and sympathies he touched men more powerfully than any other being who ever lived on this earth. His teachings are his own, by their very uniqueness. None dare to claim them from him. His doctrines descend to us, to be judged by their merits; his claims, by their fulfillment.

Jesus of Nazareth is not a myth. The writer of a book, the teacher of a system, the founder of an institution is never a myth. No institution or work testifies of Apollo, or Hobal, or Vishnu. The ancients built temples to Apollo, as men in after time have chanted hymns and reared temples to false gods of their own creation. But Apollo gave to the ancient nothing—neither religious teachings nor laws. Fictitious characters leave no footprints;

they found nothing, teach nothing. Confucius is not a fiction, nor Buddha, nor Mohammed. They powerfully moved the world, and established systems which abide. Jesus of Nazareth has influenced mankind more than any other teacher. He has changed the course of human history as no other. Instead of dealing with Jesus of Nazareth as a myth, therefore, we are compelled to regard him as an historic character, the most influential and important that ever appeared in the annals of the human race.

I am writing this in the year of our Lord 1902. We reckon the birth of Jesus of Nazareth as the beginning of a new era. History, civilization, human life, we are dating from the birth of Jesus. Thus do we in America; so do they of England, France, Italy, Germany, Russia; so do all the most enlightened and powerful and prosperous nations of the earth. Jesus is their leader, their highest authority, the author of the most inspiring and satisfying religious faith the world has known.

Jesus was the author of Christianity. It was not born of priestcraft. The Church was founded and widely planted before the first line of the New Testament was written. The foundation of the Church was faith in Jesus as the Saviour of men. The first preachers of this faith died for it. Jesus himself died to witness its truths. He who has thus changed the courses of human history and life, who won the deepest devotion of men, and stirred the

fiercest hate of men, who stood under the strongest light of human scrutiny, who "did the works that none other man did," who died for his cause, and for whom his followers died, and about whom the nations warred for centuries, is not a myth.

"That a colossal figure crossed the world's horizon nineteen hundred years ago no one does, and at present no on cares to, deny. Then, by universal testimony, commenced a new era. Changes great and grand were inaugurated; and what is most singular of all, none can now fail to see that around the name of a certain One, as an attractive center, all those marked events and changes faithfully and forever revolve. He it is, as declared by Renan, 'who created the object, and fixed the starting point, of the future faith of humanity." (Townsend.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jesus of Nazareth—His Claims.

Jesus distinctly claimed to be God manifest in the flesh, and the Redeemer of men, whose coming was foretold by the prophets.

His chosen title was the Son of Man. By this title it appears that he sought to identify himself with humanity, as belonging to the whole human race, rather than to any tribe or people. It was a title suggestive of the broadest human sympathies, and that whatever pertained to man was important to him. It implied a claim of universal brotherhood, and a representative character as the perfect man. But, according to previous usage, the term implied also such a representative character in man as rightly related him to God. It was a title applied to the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel, men who were bound to their race for suffering and service, but were also channels through whom God revealed himself to men. The term Son of Man had also been given, in Daniel, to the promised Messiah: "And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days. . . . And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which

shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii. 13, 14.)

It will appear, from examination, however, that under the title Son of Man Jesus asserted divine prerogatives. Witness such statements as these: "The Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins." (Luke v. 24.) The people who heard Jesus when he claimed to forgive sins, understanding that he thereby asserted divine authority and power, said: "He blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone?" The answer which Jesus made to this cavil was to restore immediate strength and soundness to the palsied man, thus leaving no room to doubt that the divine sanction was upon his claims. He said: "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." (Luke vi. 5.) The suggestion is that it was by him the Sabbath was ordained, and that of all matters pertaining to God's claims or man's duties he was supreme judge.

Jesus taught that he, the Son of Man, shall judge the world. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. xiii. 41-43.) "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the

earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.)

At the bar of Pilate, when that declaration was alone necessary, according to the foregone purpose of his judge, to fasten upon him the charge of blasphemy and the sentence of death, Jesus declared himself "the Christ, the Son of God," and added, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64.) "There is here," as Luthardt well observes, "no medium between truth and madness."

Not only did Jesus constantly assert divine claims under the title Son of Man, but he also accepted the title Son of God, and used this title, as correlating him with God the Father in equal authority and power.

When they were come into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" His disciples answered, giving only the most favorable opinions which they had heard expressed: "John the Baptist, Elias, or one of the prophets." Jesus, continuing, asked, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus an-

swered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 13-17.)

Again, when many of Jesus' followers were forsaking him, and he asked his disciples, "Will ye also go away? Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John vi. 67-69.) John tells us that when Jesus met the man whom he had cured of blindness he said unto him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him." (John ix. 35-38.) Of Lazarus's sickness Jesus said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, and the Son of God might be glorified thereby." (John xi. 4.)

The Son of God is a title which Jesus applies to himself, not as it is applied to men in the expression of moral likeness, but as one in whom divine nature is fully represented and embodied. His authority over men is the authority of God. His word is the word of God, and eternal life and death are in his hand. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no

man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." (John v. 21-23.) In the formulary of baptism Jesus puts his own name between the name of the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Jesus claimed to be one with the Father, and equal with him. He said: "I and the Father are one"; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The Jews were offended when he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." But his assertion of pretemporal existence was positive. It is impossible to deal fairly with the record, or to find any reasonable interpretation of his own words, and not acknowledge that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God in an absolute sense, as divine in nature, and invested with the fullness of Godhead.

Jesus represented himself as the great Sin-offering for the world. This is strikingly set forth in his institution of the Supper. He it is whose blood truly atones for men. He is that passover lamb, whose blood is "shed for many, for the remission of sins." The rescue of the Israelites from the angel of death, and their deliverance from bondage, were symbols of that spiritual life and liberty which he was come to give unto men. Through him the Jewish doctrine of atonement for sin by the blood of a sacrifice without spot or blemish was to be fulfilled. He said to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so also must the Son of man be lifted up, and who-

soever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He said to his disciples, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Luke represents Jesus, after his resurrection, as commissioning his disciples to preach his death and resurrection as completing the scheme of salvation for the world. "And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke xxiv. 46, 47.)

Jesus claimed to be an infallible teacher. He says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also." (John xiv. 6, 7.) "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth." (John v. 20.) "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John viii. 31, 32.)

Jesus claimed to be perfect and without sin. He always challenges his enemies to find in his word and work anything that is not good, or to convince him of any sin. He is coeternal with the Father, descending to this earth from the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, revealing the Father's character and will, dy-

ing for the world's sin, rising from the dead, going back to the Father. Men know the Father in him; they come to the Father when they come to him; they obey the Father when they obey him. To him the Father has committed all authority over men as their Teacher, Ruler, Saviour, and final Judge. As God is the object of faith and love and worship, so Jesus set himself in the center of all his teachings, claiming the faith, love, and homage of men. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." From his mission to earth he returns to the bosom and glory of the Father: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Such were the claims of Jesus of Nazareth. It was the acceptance of these claims, by devout men, with the tremendous issues which they involved, which gave rise to the Christian Church. The Church took its beginning immediately after the close of Jesus' earthly career, amid the scenes of that career and the people who were familiar with it. We have first a movement upon a faith established, then the record which is a backward look at that movement. The earliest Christian writings extant are the letters of Paul to churches which were widespread over the Roman empire. In these letters every doctrine is taught concerning Jesus that the Church holds to-day. And nowhere is any doctrine brought forward as if it were being

stated for the first time, or were in any sense original with the writer. The tone which Paul assumes in speaking to the early Christians is one of familiar faith with them. In his thought Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the perfect revealer of the divine character and will, the immaculate one, the Redeemer of all men, through whom we have justification, sanctification, and redemption; who is the object of faith, love, and worship, claiming of men a devotion superior to the love of the world or of life.

These were doctrines to which Paul had been converted while persecuting the Church which was founded on them. That conversion dated back to a time within three years of Jesus' death. Even at that time there were multitudes who were ready to die for this faith. There can be no doubt that believers in Jesus in the time of Stephen, the first martyr, held the very doctrines which Paul preached to the churches. There cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the doctrines which the Church holds to-day, concerning Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of men, were held from the first by Christ's followers, and that the Church, with its doctrines and its professed experimental proofs of Jesus' saving power, emerged immediately and directly from his personal teachings and life. It was the impact of Jesus' influence upon men which produced the Church, complete and full in its teachings from the start, and

ever after recognizing only the records of his first disciples and his own words as the foundation of her faith.

It was even necessary that in all things wherein Jesus would be accepted as more than a mere man he should himself assert his claims. The Church, accepting his teachings as guide, can only teach of him what he taught of himself. No doctrine or claim could be set up for Jesus against his own rejection of it, expressed or implied. No claim of divine character can be sustained for him which his teaching does not claim, and which his influence does not continually verify. Let us look, then, upon Jesus as he speaks and moves among those who first believed on him, that we may better understand by what proofs he won their faith, and by what superhuman love he bound them to him in a devotion so sublime and enduring.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Christ of the Gospels.

As one who pauses before a world-famed picture, to renew upon his mind, for the hundredth time, the thought which it embodies, with such suggestions as may arise of the skill of the painter and the sources from which his materials were gathered, so we pause to look once more on the picture of Jesus of Nazareth as it is drawn in the Gospels.

Respecting the origin and authorship of these Gospels, our chapter on the New Testament canon must suffice. We must, moreover, presume upon perfect familiarity with these records on the part of our readers, and that they are competent to weigh and judge correctly the thoughts and conclusions we shall set forth.

Respecting the character of the Gospels it is but noting a confessed truth to say that they are not histories, but merely sketches and memoirs. They neither attempt fullness of detail nor consecutiveness in the arrangement of that which is written. Much was embraced in Jesus' life, much said and done by him, of which no record is made. What is written is evidence of much that was not written. Many passages suggest this.

When John was beheaded, his disciples took up his body and buried it, "and went and told Jesus."

They found him teaching and healing in the city of Capernaum, and pressed by an eager throng. Knowing that such conditions were not congenial to bereaved hearts, with tender considerateness he said to them, "Come ye yourselves apart, into a desert place, and rest awhile"; and, entering into a boat, he sailed away on the placid Sea of Galilee, that over their sorrowing souls it might shed its waves of balm. Surely there was deep divine converse in those quiet meditative hours, but nothing is written. A little while before he was crucified, "Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples." (John xi. 54.) But John, who tells us this, gives not an echo out of this retreat, until the time that Jesus "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." And that any other evangelist has given us aught that Jesus said or did in these days of communing with his disciples there is little reason to infer. There is but one instance recorded in which Jesus resorted to Gethsemane, and yet it is told us that he "oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples"; and the inference is, that it was so much a custom, that this fact alone led the feet of the betrayer thither at the midnight hour.

There were, also, public discourses and parables delivered by Jesus, and "mighty works" wrought by him, which are not recorded in the Gospels.

Luke relates seven parables delivered by Jesus from the ship on the Sea of Galilee to the multitude on the shore. Mark gives us three. But Mark states that there were many others which he did not record. John closes his Gospel with the statement, "There are many other things which Jesus did"—"signs which he did in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book." (John xx. 30; xxi. 25.)

As to the standpoint from which the evangelists drew the picture of Jesus, it was an unequivocal faith that he was the Christ, the Son of God. The suggestion which would give John's Gospel less authority than the three earlier Gospels, because this faith is manifest in its plan, can weigh nothing against the credibility of the record. That it was the plan and purpose of the whole record is plain to be seen, and it is plainly avowed: "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name." (John xx. 31.) The fact that John draws all which he relates of Jesus' words and works to this central idea of his divinity is due, first, to the keenly philosophical mind of the writer, and, secondly, to the conditions of that later period at which he wrote, when the speculations of the Gnostics were already assailing this fundamental tenet of Christian faith. From the time that John wrote, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld

his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," he had the errors of Gnosticism in his eye, and meant strongly to assert, on the one hand, a divine manifestation, which Gnosticism accepted; and, on the other, that that manifestation was not an *eon* or incorporeal emanation, but a veritable revelation in flesh and blood—a thing which Gnosticism did not admit.

But there is no place for even the shadow of a doubt that the other evangelists, as respects their personal faith, stood as strongly upon the doctrine of Jesus' divinity as did John, and that for thirty years or more before they wrote, even from the day of Pentecost, Jesus' disciples preached, and his followers constantly held, that he was the Son of God, that he had made atonement by his death for the sin of the world, that he was risen from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The evangelists did not write of Jesus from the standpoint of questioners, undetermined in their views. And, as the occasion of writing and the need of writing seemed to them to have arisen after many years, during which time all which they then purposed to write had been confidently preached, they thought not of themselves as giving an original revelation, or needing to furnish the Church a detailed history of the teachings and acts of the founder of that religion which was, even then, widely established. As men who had personal knowledge of the founder

and his work and were chosen to be his witnesses, they felt called by the Holy Ghost to write of the things which they had personally known: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, . . . which our eyes have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life." (1 John i. 1.) So, writing, the evangelists did not feel called upon to give consecutive or detailed history, but to record such things as would set the life, works, and words of Jesus behind the then existing faith of the Church, as a justification of that faith; or, to put the case more directly and strongly, to justify themselves for their preaching of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, and for that unreserved surrender of all worldly things which they had made to establish the Church on that foundation. Such are the historic facts which must be regarded, if we would stand in the viewpoint from which the picture of Jesus was drawn by the authors of the four Gospels.

The evangelists meant to picture to the world a divine character. That the character with which they dealt was divine was the deepest conviction of their lives. Mind and heart thrilled with that thought in every touch they gave to that marvelous portrait. They meant that the world should fall down and worship that character. It was to this end that they drew it. Not only John, but all the evangelists wrote what they wrote "that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;

and that believing, we might have life through his name." Nevertheless, there is inimitable simplicity and directness in the record, as in the case of men who simply give the facts which convinced them and moved them so mightily. We are shown what sort of character it was and what sort of teaching and association gave rise to Christian faith and life.

Yet we claim the right, yea we confess the duty, of examining with critical scrutiny the picture set before us, that we may judge whether it represents a divine original.

The life of Jesus, for thirty years, is little known. The portents attending his birth, the hope confessed of Simeon and Anna, seem to have been forgotten, save that "Mary hid these things in her heart." Brief references give us to understand that Jesus grew up to the trade of a carpenter at Nazareth, in the home of his parents, Joseph and Mary; that he was obedient to them as a dutiful son, was devout in spirit, and was looked upon with favor by good men; that when he first visited the temple, at twelve years of age, the Jewish rabbis were surprised and pleased at his piety, wisdom, and docility. The statement that "he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man," suggests normal development to the maturity of manhood, and removes from our thought supernatural manifestations. It was, indeed, inevitable that, in after time, when Jesus was adored as a God, the

human fancy should manufacture miracles of his childhood and youth, and seek to fill up that void in the gospel story with signs and wonders. The fact that this was done by many writers, but that the evangelists give no place to such fancies, and the early Church repudiated them, is valuable testimony to the fidelity of the Gospels.

But the fact that nothing supernatural is recorded of Jesus in his youth, and that his life was kept within the bounds of human custom—he not assuming to teach till he was of legal age—has given color to the view of some that divine nature did not possess Jesus in its fullness until the baptism in Jordan, when the Holy Ghost, in visible form, descended upon him, and the voice of God was heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; and that from that time, "led by the Spirit," he went into the wilderness, and "in the power of the Spirit returned," and in perfect union with Godhead began, and carried to conclusion, his mission as the Saviour of men. Some there be who have fixed in their thought such a theory of incarnation as forbids this view; but incarnation, in its conditions and methods, is a subject on which we may not dogmatize.

The keynote of Jesus' ministry, as set forth in the Gospels, was sounded in his sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach

the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke iv. 18, 19.) Jesus here adopts the words of Isaiah. They represent one commissioned to proclaim every blessing, and offer every good within the resources of infinite love and power, and his words, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," represented himself as the especial subject of this prophetic utterance.

The first distinctive phase of character which we contemplate in Jesus is his beneficence. In this every moral quality is embraced. He who seeks naught but the good of others, and seeks that end with an all-absorbing and self-consuming devotion, has every moral power of his nature, under the sway of the "perfect law of liberty" and in the work of love, stimulated to full play.

Men had been wont to view virtue on the negative side. The constant utterance of the law was, "Thou shalt not." But in contemplating the character of Jesus Christ the negative view need not detain us. The reader will call to mind the tests of his patience, humility, forgiveness, and own that "when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was persecuted, he threatened not." He will call to remembrance how, when called "a gluttonous man and a winebibber," he only reminded the ac-

cusers that they were as ready to accuse John the Baptist for his austere life; how he gently chided the anger of his disciples when the Samaritans refused them lodging; how he spoke without resentment to Judas his betrayer, was "led as a lamb to the slaughter," meek and dumb; and how, in his dying agony, he prayed for his murderers. Such passages as these, abounding in the sketches given us of Jesus' life, are sufficient historical setting for claims which he set up for himself when he challenged his enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" when he says, "I am meek and lowly in heart"; "I do always the will of my Father"; "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," has been written of him, and no man denies the claim. Not the faintest consciousness of guilt, nor the recognition of aught in himself but a purity which would bear divine tests, appears in any utterance of Jesus of Nazareth.

The bare suggestion that there was an outburst of anger in Jesus' cursing the barren fig tree is puerile, so plain is it that his purpose was to set before the disciples an object lesson, to convey to them, in allegorical form, truths concerning the character and destiny of the Jewish nation. What his own feelings were in the contemplation of that destiny, let his weeping and lamentation over Jerusalem interpret.

Mark tells us (iii. 5) that Jesus "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Reproof and condemnation were the demands of the highest holiness in the presence of a perverseness and an opposition to good which were grounded only in a wicked heart. For fallen men and women, self-condemned, the need is sympathy and tenderness. And to such —the outcasts of society—Jesus was pitiful. But when arrogance, and carnal pride, and self-seeking usurp the places and functions of the religious teacher, and in the name of God trample the people, to assail and expose and condemn such, so far from suggesting carnal motives, must be recognized as the highest exhibition of positive benevolence and love. When the issue is to support the fundamental principles upon which the common good of all men rests, the demand is for a courage which is ready to assail the evil and die, if need be, for the good. It is this which makes glorious the hero who dies in battle for a noble cause, and enrolls his name among the benefactors of mankind. It is this which makes mercy sterner than justice, when the issue is to protect the public weal and every man's life and home against a foe. As Coleridge has beautifully expressed it, should Justice falter in such an issue, Mercy must strengthen the hand of the Judge:

> And oh! if some strange trance
> The eyelids of thy sterner sister press,

Seize Mercy, thou, more terrible, the brand,
And hurl the thunderbolt with fiercer hand.

There is a sublime example of this sort of moral courage and fidelity to human weal in Jesus' encounter with the scribes and Pharisees, in the temple porch on the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem, and just before the tragic enactments of Calvary. It was a final effort on the part of the highest authorities of the Jewish Church to silence the teacher before that last resort—the taking of his life. It was the culmination of opposition on the one hand and of fidelity on the other. The chief priests, the elders, and scribes, and captains of the temple guard approached him in a body, and challenged him: "By what authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?" Him, whom they had failed to seduce by flatteries, or entangle by their wiles, or confound by their cunning, they will, at last, meet with authority. Jesus, recognizing that the last assault was upon his courage and fidelity to his mission, faced the issue in a manner which surpasses all example in its fearless, strong, even-balanced denunciations of official and priestly corruption. He denounces his assailants—those professed guides to holiness—as selfish, deceivers, devourers of widows' houses, pretenders, garnished sepulchers, men who closed the gate of heaven against the people; and his cry, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" breaks again and again through his

speech like the rolling thunder of a storm, until it culminates in the sentence which seems to us the lightning flash of divine wrath, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" There is not in all that is recorded of Jesus, save the agony and prayer on the cross, a more sublime example of courage and self-abnegation for the welfare of men than this reproof of the Pharisees and scribes. It was made in the shadow of the cross, and with the certain knowledge that it would precipitate the tragedy of the crucifixion. It was this positive, all-controlling love for mankind which bore Jesus far beyond all negative tests of goodness, so that the words "sinless," "guileless," "immaculate," entirely fail to represent him. His mission and work were not to save himself from sin, but to save the world from sin. While he owns the infirmities, and temptations of a man, he speaks to man as his rescuer and Saviour. He says of himself, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Every word which Jesus speaks and every act which he performs is in harmony with this claim. He came that men "might have life, and have it more abundantly." He came "not to judge the world, but to save the world." He made himself the center of all his teaching. All the authority and power and love of the All-Father is in him, and believing on him men find eternal life. In all that

Jesus does there is manifest this self-consciousness of being man's Saviour and Redeemer. He battles for full victory over the powers of darkness, not for himself, but for the race. He is the Son of Man, not as being what man is, but what God calls man to be. He is the type of humanity delivered from sin. He leads the way to that deliverance; he gives the power to gain it. He invites every test that can commend him to man's love and faith, that the Captain of our salvation may be made "perfect through suffering." He is "the bread of life." He dwells in true believers, "a well of water, springing up into eternal life." Always, this thought of seeking and saving men is manifest. No scorn of men, no reviling, turned him from it for one moment, and it rose to its highest expression in the agony of the cross. The cross he looked to as his victory: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." How could it have been otherwise than as the evangelists record, that victory began with Jesus' death? A wild, dark throng with jeers and mockeries surged around the dying Christ on Calvary. But when he had borne the last test of torture and insult and said, "It is finished, and bowed his head and gave up the ghost," then redeeming love began to be victorious. The centurion, who led the execution, looked upon the dead face of Jesus and said, "Surely this man was the Son of God." Those meek eyes, now set in

death, rained arrows over all the host that scoffed erewhile. Silence and awe took the place of scoffing. "Every one that came to the sight smote upon his breast and returned to the city." Jesus' enemies thought to fasten upon him the cross, that symbol of infamy and guilt, and sink his name in eternal obloquy beneath its weight. But such was his moral power that, stained by his blood, the cross became the symbol of life and purity and salvation—a jewel which the pure in heart will cherish forever.

Jesus' assertion of divinity cannot be separated from his assertion of his saving power. And it may be said of both that, though his claim was clearly made, it was not made by formal proclamation, but by manifestation in word and deed, which left no possible conclusion but that he held himself for a divine person. We have seen that he commended Peter for confessing, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," but he charged his disciples that "they should tell no man that thing." True faith could not rest upon his assertion of this claim, but his proof of it. Yet, it is ever present in his thought. Before he has finished his sermon upon the mount, he has transported his hearers to the awful scenes of the judgment day and placed himself on the judgment throne; and the ground of acceptance or condemnation before God, and the condition of eternal weal or woe, are the acceptance or rejection of

himself. "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." He is greater than Moses. He says, "Ye have heard," then quotes the very law which Moses received of God on Sinai, and proceeds, "*But I say unto you.*" He is "greater than the temple," "greater than Solomon." He is not simply David's son, but "David's Lord." He was "before Abraham." He dwelt in divine glory "before the world was." Though he is visibly on earth, he is still in heaven. The kingdom of God is his kingdom. The angels of God are his angels. He is Judge of all men. Such statements abound in the words of Jesus. The self-consciousness of divinity seems never absent from his words and deeds.

Jesus never speaks as one who doubts. He never reasons to a conclusion. No secret is hidden from him in the divine will concerning man, nor in the human heart in its relations to God. His teaching is ever positive, clear, and emphatic. He dares to say, "He that heareth my words shall know the truth." Thus it is that the self-assertion of divine knowledge and authority echoes through all Jesus' words like a sub-harmony in music. Simple, natural, inimitable in its expression, it marks the record as the simple picture of a character which never had its like on earth.

In harmony with the character and claims of Jesus already noticed is the record of his miracles. These are only works of beneficence. Never, in any case, does he call in supernatural power for his own protection. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He who created bread for others refused to use his power to relieve himself under stress of famine. He who raised the dead went unresisting to death, declaring that he could call legions of angels from heaven to defend him from his foes.

So far as respects himself, in the sphere of human needs and sufferings, Jesus taught us to serve God in accepting the burdens and results of God's laws of nature. He never invoked supernatural power to lighten burdens which belong to the flesh or to deliver himself from deprivation or pain. The perfect example to men, he will not do for himself that which other men cannot do. Being made under the law and found in fashion as a man, he will be obedient unto death, and accept no immunity. Were it the will of God that men should be delivered from the pains and burdens incident to those physical laws which he has ordained, Jesus could have set us the example and shown us the way to such deliverance.

The miracles of Jesus have the distinctive character that they were manifestations of his own power. The prophets who performed miracles appeared

only as agents for God, coming upon the scenes as he directed and acting under his command. The wonder-working power belonged not to them. They did not claim it as their own, nor did it always attend them. It was not at their command.

But in Jesus the power to work miracles is normal and constant. To him they are not miracles, but the expression of a power and authority belonging to himself. He waits not the Father's command. All that God may do, under the circumstances, he does. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Whatever the Father doeth this doeth also the Son. He has perfect unity with the divine nature, so that he can do nothing contrary to the divine will, but does not inquire as to the divine will or invoke divine power. In himself divine nature and will abide.

Jesus does not refer the glory of his wonderful works to the Father, but claims to stand equal in the Father's glory; and men are to believe in the Son as they believe in the Father.

There is this, also, to be observed in regard to Jesus' miracles: they are not portents of power to assert the existence and overwatching providence of God, as the signs of Moses and the prophets; but are, for the most part, revelations and operations addressed to the spiritual state of men in line with this claim as a personal Saviour from sin. The faith or unfaith of others had nothing to do with those manifestations of power which

God gave his people through Moses, for they were to ground them in the doctrine of the one God, the Lord Jehovah, and his moral government over men. The miracles attributed to the prophets, in after time, were of the same character. But Jesus makes the exercise of faith by others the condition of manifesting his power. He seeks to draw men into spiritual fellowship with himself, and to impart himself to them. If this is not a uniform condition, it is so far general as to constitute an altogether unique feature in Jesus' work. One will naturally say that before Jesus had a right to claim faith in himself as a worker of miracles, or one who could forgive sins and heal the souls of men, he must lay the foundation of such faith in a voluntary and unconditioned display of supernatural power. And here, as in every other respect, we are called to mark the consistency of the gospel story, in the fact that such was the beginning of Jesus' miracles. The turning of water into wine, at the marriage feast of Cana, was solicited by no one, nor was it to convey directly any spiritual blessing to any one. It was the necessary form of entrance, however, upon that ministry of "mighty works" which lay before the Saviour—a ground furnished to faith in his divine power. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him." (John ii. 11.)

Following this introduction, Jesus' miracles

were ministries of love and saving power, which went forth in answer to that personal faith which was to be set before all the "heavy laden" as the condition of spiritual deliverance and rest in him.

In respect to teaching, there was never any to compare with Jesus. In the beginning of his ministry he breaks through formalism and the mere letter of commandments, and the dead works and ritualistic piety of the Pharisees, and calls men to enter into a sphere of communion with God where the very nature of man is transformed and made instinct with divine impulses. Negative piety sinks out of sight, and the "Thou shalt not" of the law is forgotten. It is superseded by the love which is a law unto itself. Purity of heart which always sees God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love even for one's enemies, a compassion for all men like that of the All-Father—such motives only can make men the children of the Father in heaven and pass them into the realm and reign of that kingdom of heaven which he has come to establish; and he says, in the face of the most punctilious legalists, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus is not provincial. He stands not upon any national sentiments. He knows neither high nor low, bond nor free, Jew nor Gentile, in his teaching. Putting aside everything but principles,

he gives rules and precepts which are for all nations, and for all time. His appeal to the human conscience can never lose its power, nor can his authority be circumscribed by conditions of time or place. Other teachers have had their day, other systems have passed. In the calm self-confidence that what he teaches shall hold the conscience of the world forever, he says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Is it necessary to argue that such a picture as is set before us in the Gospels was not within the power of human invention? The character of Jesus of Nazareth is original at every point. It is not paralleled in any one, or suggested in all human examples. No production of the human mind ever approached it before. It seems absurd to suggest invention, in view of such a picture. And we need not here press into service that axiom of Hugh Miller, respecting the limitations of human genius, that "no dramatist can paint taller than himself." We should hesitate to apply this in the moral realm. It is true in the sphere of the purely intellectual. He who portrays an imaginary hero cannot endow his creation with more wit, or learning, or judgment, or genius than he himself possesses. But this cannot be said of morals. It would require a Shakespeare to invent a Shakespeare; but a poor, groveling sinner, who knows not how to love or forgive, can portray and extol love and pity, and represent scenes and characters in which these vir-

tues are beautifully exhibited. Neither is the inventor here left wholly to the guidance of examples known. He draws materials out of his own moral consciousness. Man's moral ideals have always been higher than his attainments. Here every dramatist paints taller than himself. The consciousness of his fallen nature is only impressed upon man by an ideal of goodness which is unattained and unattainable in human strength. Only under such conditions does conviction of sin arise and the sense of need of divine aid. It was not the teaching of Moses nor the teaching of Jesus which gave to man first this sense of moral thralldom, although all clearer revelations of moral light deepen that conviction. But where the nations dwell under the dimmest starlight of natural religion, there is confessed the fact of a sinful nature and the need of divine deliverance.

> Though bound by obstructions of clay to this sphere,
> Our hearts may aspire to a better to rise;
> Yet evil the weight is that fixes us here,
> And frail are our pinions, and far are the skies.

It cannot be said that it is only the reality of Jesus' life and teaching which has given to man moral ideals above himself, and even above all human example.

And yet, without the slightest misgiving, we must pronounce the picture of Jesus Christ, as presented in the Gospels, as a thing impossible to human invention. That character, even in its moral

manifestations, was never approached in the realm of the ideal. It seemed necessary that man's thought of goodness should be bounded with thoughts of God and his law, and of a subordinate creature moved by considerations of divine authority, and fear of divine judgments. Man's ideal of moral excellence was necessarily limited by his idea of God. A love which was its own law, and beneficence which, instead of service of God, was even as God himself stooping to earth, was surely not a conception which any man would attempt to embody in flesh and blood, and set forth as the ideal man. For though we have acknowledged the idea of a Mediator, revealed in human form, as an ancient and almost world-wide doctrine, the infinite distance there is between the character of Jesus and any of the creations of the human mind, in this regard, is testimony that such a character, as a human conception, was impossible.

Neither did the Jewish conception of God furnish ground for such a character as that attributed to Jesus, had it been the purpose of the evangelists to represent their own Lord Jehovah under a veil of flesh. Jesus gave to man new conceptions of God. He came to show us the Father, to invest our thought of God with feelings of tenderness and trust; and the distinguishing point in his revelations is the better view of God himself. There were prophetic suggestions, indeed, pointing the

way from Sinai to Calvary. But Jewish exclusiveness and pride, or even the highest type of Jewish piety, drew no such picture of Immanuel—God-with-us—as could represent Jesus Christ.

The character of Jesus is drawn dramatically by all the evangelists. They do not describe Jesus. He appears upon the stage to speak and act for himself. His teachings are not such as any set of men, no matter how highly gifted, could have invented. His parables and discourses were utterly beyond the capacity of John the fisherman, or Matthew the tax-gatherer. Jesus "spake as never man spake." It was so declared in his day, and is so confessed now.

The writers of the Gospels convince us of fidelity and sincerity at every point. The setting of environment which they give to Jesus is most accurate as respects the conditions of the times, Jewish modes of life and thought, and the stage to which religion and religious ideas had been developed. The writers represent themselves as being taught at every step, constantly surprised and thrown into deeper pauses of thought, by the words of the Master. They are men possessed of the common ideas of their nation, the common prejudices. Jesus is ever leading upon a path which is shadowed with mystery, and when they follow wondering, half committed, often misunderstanding their Teacher, often needing to be reproved, and, at last, when Jesus dies upon the cross even their

hope that "it was he who should redeem Israel" died also. Such a scheme of redemption was not of their planning or conception.

But it seems a waste of words to argue that Jesus Christ was really such as the evangelists represent. Their own lives and works are an answer which renders any other view absurd. They did not invent a character and then run such careers of suffering to sustain a known fiction. The way in which they went was not of their choosing. Here the words of the Master are manifestly true: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." They did not create Jesus; he created them. He made them what they were. His words, his example, and his spirit had transformed them, had given them experiences which verified the high truths which they taught in his name. Under the power of these truths and experiences they had renounced all worldly things, and given themselves to unparalleled self-denials and sufferings for the salvation of men; and this they had done for many years before they wrote these memoirs of the Master. Power had gone forth from that wonderful life and character which had already made thousands upon thousands of men and women believers and new creatures in Christ, before Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote the story of Jesus of Nazareth. It is these indubitable facts of history, and this self-verifying character of the faith in Christ, that render it impossible to give even serious thought

to the claim that the character of Jesus was invented.

There have not been lacking learned men and strong reasoners to oppose the Christian doctrine of divine incarnation in Jesus Christ; and yet few have attempted to argue that Jesus Christ was to any extent an imaginary character. A real personality, the most powerful which was ever projected upon the current of human history, cannot be denied. But some sort of union with God, some sort of acting under the divine guidance, is contrived, other than Christian faith asserts, to explain the wonderful phenomenon; the one point aimed at being to eliminate the supernatural and to show in Jesus Christ, not God stooping down to this world, but man raising himself up to God. Ah! could we but believe that evolution had produced but this one perfect flower of humanity, we might deny total depravity, the need of atonement and regenerating grace, and still talk of salvation for man.

Let us hear some of the utterances of great men who have assailed the doctrine of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. What do they make of Christ?

Richter assailed Christian doctrine, but called Christ "the purest of the mighty, and the mightiest of the pure, who, with his pierced hands, raised empires from their foundations, turned the stream of history from its old channels, and still continues to rule and guide the ages."

Fichte, who is deemed a skeptic and an atheist, owns Jesus as the greatest character the world has known. "Till the end of time, all the intelligent will bow low before Jesus of Nazareth, and all will humbly acknowledge the exceeding glory of this great phenomenon. His followers are the nations and generations."

Hegel, from the standpoint of his philosophy, speaks of Jesus of Nazareth as "the person in whose self-consciousness the unity of the divine and human first came forth, and with an energy that, in the whole course of his life and character, diminished to the very lowest possible degree all limitations of this unity. In this respect he stands alone and unequaled in the world's history."

This idea, suggested by Hegel, is substantially that of Renan, who, finding it impossible to doubt the substantial truth of the gospel record, still conceived of Jesus as divine only as lofty genius, and pure instincts, and immaculate life, and communion with the divine and spiritual may make a man the Son of God. Renan says: "Jesus has no visions; God does not speak to him from without. God is in him; he feels that he is with God, and he draws from his heart what he says of his Father. He lives in the bosom of God by uninterrupted communication; he does not see him, but he understands him without need of thunder and burning bush like Moses, of a revealing tempest like Job, of an oracle like the old Greek sages, of a

familiar genius like Socrates, or of an angel Gabriel like Mohammed. . . . Between thee and God there will be no longer any distinction. Complete conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither shall follow thee, by the royal road which thou hast traced, ages of worshipers.

"Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing; his legend will call forth tears without end; his sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will claim that, among the sons of men, there is none born greater than Jesus."

Instead of an ideal character, Renan sees in Jesus a personality towering above the outlines which the evangelists have given. He says: "Far from having been created by his disciples, Jesus appears in all things superior to his disciples. They, Paul and St. John excepted, were men without talent or genius. . . . Upon the whole, the character of Jesus, far from being embellished by his biographers, has been belittled by them.

"Jesus is unique in everything, and nothing can compare with him. He is a man of colossal dimensions, the Adorable One, who shall preside over the destinies; to whom universal conscience has decreed the title *Son of God*."

Yet Jesus was not the Son of God in Renan's thought as one who dwelt in glory with the Father before the world was, and who came forth from the Father to reveal to us divine things; but Son

of God as the perfect man, whose relations to God were perfect; the Son of God as man may reach up to God, and not as God reaching down to man.

We might greatly extend this citation of testimony from men who, rejecting the doctrine of incarnation as formulated by the Church, yet, in the direct contemplation of Jesus' character found no titles or terms to qualify that character less than "the Divine," "the Son of God." But one more example must suffice.

William Ellery Channing, the father of American Unitarianism, says: "I confess, when I can escape the deadening power of habit, and can receive the full import of such passages as the following: 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' 'I am come to seek and to save that which was lost,' 'He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven,' 'Whosoever shall be ashamed of me before men, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father, with his holy angels,' 'In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you'; I say, when I can succeed in realizing the import of these passages, I feel myself listening to a being such as never before and never since spake in human language; I am awed by the consciousness of greatness which these simple words express; and when I connect this greatness with the proofs of Christ's

miracles, I am compelled to exclaim with the centurion, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'

"Here I pause; and, indeed, I know not what can be added to heighten the wonder, reverence, and love which are due to Jesus. When I consider him, not only as possessed with the consciousness of unexampled and unbounded majesty, but as recognizing a kindred nature in human beings, and living and dying to raise them to a participation of his divine glories—and when I see him, under these views, allying himself to men by the tenderest ties, embracing them with a humanity which no insult, injury, or pain could for a moment repel or overpower—I am filled with wonder, as well as reverence and love. I feel that this character is no human invention, that it was not assumed through fraud, or struck out by enthusiasm, for it is infinitely above their reach.

"When I add this character of Jesus to the other evidence of his religion, it gives, to what before seemed so strong, a new and a vast accession of strength. I feel as if I could not be deceived. The Gospels must be true. They were drawn from a living original; they were founded on reality. The character of Jesus is not a fiction; he was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested."

CHAPTER XX.

Jesus of Nazareth—The Resurrection.

The doctrine of Jesus' resurrection is fundamental to the Christian system. Without this doctrine, the Christian Church would never have come into existence. In view of what Jesus taught concerning himself, his resurrection from the dead could alone set upon his claims the unquestionable seal of divine authority and truth, and present him to the world as the revealer of the way into eternal life. If his career had ended at the cross; if, in the darkness of the grave, he had been hidden from the world forever, instead of inspiration and hope for the good man in that career, no example could have preached so powerfully of darkness and despair. When the most divine in spirit and character of all men, devoting himself to the one purpose of saving men, had fallen under shame and scorn and ineffable torture at the hands of those who professed to love goodness and teach the will of God, what inspiration to goodness had there been remaining still to man?

Every essential doctrine of the Christian religion requires the support afforded in the doctrine of Jesus' resurrection. His own divine nature, the redemption made for us by his death, the assurance of life beyond the grave, and personal salvation

through faith in him who claims to be for us the Way, the Truth, and the Life, would all fall into confusion together without this support. The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead is the keystone of the entire arch of Christian doctrine. No one ever gave stronger expression to this fact than the apostle Paul. He says: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." He who claimed to come forth from the depths of eternity, to connect himself with human nature and life, needed to give proof that he had returned to the bosom and glory of the Father. That all his teaching and work might not end in the darkness of despair, he needed to show his connection with the spirit world, and reveal himself as King in the spirit realm. To furnish motives to men to renounce the world for his sake and choose the path which he trod, Jesus Christ needed to "abolish death and bring life and immortality to light," leading other where than simply into the darkness of the grave.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is, according to Christian teaching, asserted by two classes of evidence—the historical and the experimental. According to the gospel history of the founding of the Church, Simon Peter, in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, challenged his hearers to regard two classes of evidence then presented to the fact of Jesus' resurrection, namely, (1) the testimony of competent human witnesses, who were able to es-

tablish the fact, so far as human testimony could establish anything supernatural; and (2) the direct witness of the Holy Ghost in answer to the testimony which the apostles bore.

"We are witnesses," said Peter. It is impossible to doubt that the apostles were convinced of Jesus' resurrection. Their preaching of this doctrine, under circumstances which placed them beyond any temporal motive or interest in this matter, is the proof of their sincerity. They entered upon the public proclamation of this doctrine in the face of that opposition to Jesus which had put him to death. They had nothing to expect but just such persecutions as did follow. They, according to the gospel record, had been assured, by their Master, that they should be hated and put to death if they followed him, and were his faithful witnesses. If it were possible to doubt what is told us of the Master's teaching in this regard, it is not possible to question the facts of history with which we are dealing here, namely, that the disciples of Jesus did, in the face of continued persecution, and at the cost of their lives, testify to the resurrection of their Master.

Further, these disciples began to bear this testimony upon the very spot where the things which they asserted should have occurred, and to the people who were of all best prepared to judge of what they asserted. It was in the city of Jerusalem, and within fifty days of the events re-

ferred to. Now the crucifixion of Jesus, on the one hand, and, on the other, the establishment of the Church in Jerusalem, on the faith that he rose from the dead, are historic facts. We are able to establish both of these facts outside of the gospel record. Tacitus says, in his Annals, that "the Christians took their name from one Christ, who, during the reign of Tiberius, was sentenced under Pilate." Lucianus calls Jesus "the great man who was crucified in Palestine"; and, again, "the crucified sophist, who had been the author of a new religion." Josephus says: "In those days lived Jesus, a wise man, for he performed several extraordinary works and made many Jews and heathen his followers. When Pilate had condemned him, on the accusation of our most prominent men, those who first loved him did not forsake him; and, to this day, the sect of Christians, called after his name, have not died out."

Profane history shows us the Christian Church, widespread, within a generation after Christ, and claiming its origin and all its traditions from Jerusalem. None questions that it had its beginning there, and that it arose from the preaching of Jesus' immediate disciples, following directly upon his crucifixion. Those who seek to practice imposition place the scenes and events of which they testify in distant lands and times. Thus the teachers of heathen mythologies conjured up from the remote past shadowy forms and creations of

fancy, to please national pride, or feed the yearnings of religious faith, or to make allegorical setting for metaphysical truths. The disciples of Jesus asserted facts within the reach of their hearers. They claimed no knowledge superior to that which the hearers might attain. "This Jesus was known by you; he performed miracles here in your city; your rulers put him to death, and he is risen from the dead"—such was the form of their testimony. They based nothing on supernatural knowledge or divine revelation. If it had been possible to refute their statements, the Jewish leaders who opposed them, and who were charged with the greatest sin by their preaching, had every opportunity, motive, and resource for refutation. Even the dead body of Jesus could have been quickly produced. The statement which the gospel record says those Jewish leaders set afloat, namely, that the whole Roman guard, set to watch the sepulcher, went to sleep, and that while they slept the disciples came and stole the body of Jesus, though the best answer which their cunning or unbelief could devise, is not worthy of serious notice. That the disciples of Jesus thus united to lay the foundation of a false faith, and then unitedly surrendered all things, even to life, to establish that faith, is utterly beyond belief.

The history of the disciples is not one of self-seeking. Selfish motives never appear in their conduct at any point. Everything goes to prove that

they had the deepest convictions of duty, and that they believed that unspeakable blessings to mankind were lodged in their mission and message. They sought the salvation of men. They thought to lift up men into higher life. They were philanthropists of the highest type. Their lives were such as neither carnal motives nor heathen faith ever produced. A deep conviction of the truths of Christianity and an impulse of divine love—call it "the enthusiasm of humanity" if you will—from Christ himself, is the only explanation of such lives as the apostles led.

And let any one who would call these disciples sincere men but misguided in their faith, that to them was committed the highest, noblest mission ever undertaken for the race, judge now, by all that Christianity has brought to the world, whether they were deceived or not. A leaven of divine eternal love has gone forth with the message of these disciples of Jesus, which has pervaded every circle and condition of human life and given man new life and hope.

There is not a trace of fanaticism in the work of these disciples of Jesus. Fanaticism is intense in its advocacy, but resentful when opposed. It is fitful and inconsistent. It has no reasons to justify its conclusions. It demands subordination to itself, and does not stoop to serve others. It does not choose the path of humanity or self-renunciation. But the disciples of Jesus were consistent

in their teachings, consistent in their convictions, and in their lives as judged by their faith. They were patient and loving in their zeal. The faith which they professed has been the mightiest of all influences to bless the world. Their lives, in the light of their faith, are sublime examples of fidelity and truth.

As respects their information, the disciples were competent witnesses. Jesus was as well known to them as any man might be known to others. Sincere men may be misled by statements of others in whom they trust. So faith begets faith, and one believes in another's belief. The faith in Jesus did not come to the disciples from a distance. They did not receive it at second hand. Jesus was not a hero seen by them through other men's fancies. "That which our eyes have seen, which our ears have heard, and our hands have handled" is the category of facts to which they depose in evidence.

They were not men of easy credulity. An open and empty sepulcher had not convinced them. The testimony of "certain women" that Jesus was risen, and that they had seen him, made them astonished, but did not convince them. Frequent appearances to many witnesses, not as an apparition, or a vision of the night, but as Jesus walking with them in the light of day, talking with them as a man, yet as man could not talk; his commission to them to preach salvation in his name, his ascension to heaven in their sight, after various manifestations run-

ning through a period of forty days—such were the facts asserted by the witnesses of Jesus' resurrection, as the ground of their faith. Their testimony is consistent. It is self-supporting. Its variety of statement excludes the idea of collusion; its substantial agreement is proof that it had facts for its foundation.

There is consistency in the story of Jesus' resurrection in another point of view. It is in harmony with the whole gospel story and really demanded for its unity and consistency. Strange as the story of Jesus' resurrection may seem, the story of his life and work and wondrous character is not complete or consistent without this story of his resurrection. The sequel of such a career and such claims must be the breaking of the full light of heaven upon the finished work. For it is not for himself, but for humanity, that Jesus appears upon this earth; and the blessings he comes to bestow are made possible only to faith in him as the revealer of the perfect will of God—God manifest in the flesh, the Saviour of the world. Without such faith in him, according to his own testimony, his mission fails; but in order to such faith we must see Jesus emerge into divine glory beyond the grave.

The testimony of the apostles was believed by those who heard it. The record says three thousand accepted the faith the first day it was preached in Jerusalem, and that the number had grown to

eight thousand a few days afterwards. However this may have been, there is no questioning the fact that the Church was established first in Jerusalem, and that the number of its members grew rapidly.

We can no more question the sincerity of the first believers than we can question the sincerity of the first preachers of the faith. The all-controlling truth was that Jesus was risen. This was announced, not as a theory or conclusion of any system of reasoning or doctrine, but as an historic fact, within hand's touch and proof of those to whom it was declared; and the sequel shows that the fact was believed before it was preached, and that the proclamation came like fire upon fuel prepared for the flame. The people accepted the faith of salvation through the risen Christ, in full view of a rising storm of persecution which soon broke upon them in a rain of blood.

But Peter also claimed that present experimental evidence attested the truth of his preaching, that Jesus was risen from the dead. The power with which the message struck upon the consciences of men, and its effect in moving them to confess their sins, and turn to the obedience of Christ, against all worldly motives, he declared to be nothing less than the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, setting the seal of God's approval upon the faith in a risen Christ.

The story of Pentecost, especially, presents the

fact that full conviction of the doctrines of Christ's divinity, his atonement for men, his resurrection, and that salvation is by him alone, does not avail to give men strength to renounce all things for a spiritual life. These convictions the disciples themselves felt, and confessed also the commission, laid on them, to preach to the world the gospel of salvation through Jesus of Nazareth. But they were only made triumphant over carnal influences by the "power from on high" which came upon them in the descent of the Holy Ghost. So, when thousands cried, under the apostle's preaching, "What must we do to be saved?" and, when they had accepted Christ as their Saviour, rejoicing in their deliverance from sin, the preacher pointed to these results as operations of the Holy Ghost, and the divine seal upon the message which he had delivered.

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 32, 33.) Not the speaking with tongues, merely, on the part of the apostles, but the marvelous effect of the message upon those who received it, is here referred to. As we are not dependent upon the testimony of the gospel record for evidence of the influence here appealed to, it being claimed by Christianity as a perpetual manifestation, we have

regarded it as a form of proof belonging legitimately to our argument.

Incorporated in the Christian teaching is the claim that Jesus himself promised that the Holy Ghost should be his witness forever. By the power of the Holy Ghost, and swayed by his influence, men should know that Jesus was no less than God manifest in the flesh for human redemption, and that they had come into possession of the salvation promised. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John xiv. 20.) "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John xiv. 21.) "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." (John xiv. 18.) These and similar promises made by Jesus, not to his disciples only, but to all true beievers and followers in future time, demand of the Church continual proof that the Christian's faith is not in a dead hero, but in a living Saviour.

The gospel claims for Jesus a faith which cannot be placed in any mere man. A great teacher he was, indeed; so was Socrates, so was Plato, a great teacher. A peerless example of moral purity was Jesus, but he claims our faith not merely as the Way and the Truth, but as the Life also—the giver of a new life to men. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true

God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 2, 3.) "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 12, 13.) We can give no reasonable interpretation to such scriptures which will exclude the claim of a direct operation of the Holy Ghost, renewing the nature of the believer in Jesus. The faith required in him goes beyond the acceptance of a wise teacher or a noble example. That which it calls for is surrender to Jesus as a living Saviour and a reigning King. The world at large accepts Jesus as a sage, but he who only regards him thus has not the faith in him which the gospel demands. Trust in him as a divine Saviour is demanded, and the experimental evidence that such trust is not misplaced is guaranteed.

The Christian faith puts the believer upon ground to verify the fact that Jesus is risen from the dead, in Jesus' own answer, through the Holy Ghost as promised. Deliverance from the bondage of sin, immediate change of affections and motives and experience, a conscious passing from death unto life—such are the proofs promised that he who accepts Jesus as a living divine Saviour does not trust in vain.

It is not even in a theoretical form that the true believer accepts Jesus as a Saviour. One who

passes not beyond the theory, and the intellectual assent, is not a true believer. He is called upon to make trial of his belief in full personal surrender to Jesus as his Saviour and King; and if no joy comes to his heart, no strength against sin, no relief to the condemned soul, then will the promises of Jesus fail. The verification of the faith in him as a Saviour will be wanting; the claim will refute itself.

It was upon the verification of the doctrine that Jesus was risen and enthroned at the right hand of God the Father that Peter stood upon the day of Pentecost. Not alone that which was past, of which he said "all we are witnesses," but "that which you now see and hear," was presented in evidence. We take up this form of evidence because it, too, has passed into history, and, according to the claim of the Church, should be an historic fact manifest in the influences of Christian faith in the world in every age. Considering what the Christian doctrine is, can we believe that Jesus could still hold sway in the faith of men if no answer had come to any soul through trust in his name? If the burdened sinner had always come to him in vain; if the struggling, tempted soul had found in him no strength, would the world believe on him after the weary struggle of twenty centuries?

Faith in Buddha or Confucius or Mohammed may remain, for the faith in these is a faith in sys-

tems of doctrine. It is, and only claims to be, a theoretical faith. The faith in Jesus as a living Saviour, revealing himself in saving power to his own, is far different, and provides in itself for its own refutation and confusion if ever there ceases to be the demonstration of what it promises.

Jesus is present with us still, revealing his divine power. He touches the leprous clean. He opens the eyes of the blind. He calls the dead from their graves. Moral strength and life which no mere faith of doctrine can impart, and no mere strength of will attain, attest the presence and work of Christ in the world. It is to the faith that is voiced in prayer that these blessings are given. They are verifications of Jesus' claims to such as put his claims to the test, according to his promises. Jesus is standing in the midst of our suffering, dying humanity, saying, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

CHAPTER XXI.

The Fulfillment of Our Hopes.

The crowning evidence that the religion of the Bible is from God is its self-verifying character. Without recapitulation of the arguments which we have presented under that head, we will say here that the doctrine that there is a God, the Creator and Ruler of all things, reason requires us to accept as the last term of a mental equation. If we eliminate this, there is no rational view of things existing; no purpose or end in the stupendous fabric of the universe; no meaning in the aspirations and wants of man.

He who believes that God is a moral governor, having a purpose in man's creation and career, will be prepared to believe that he has given to man a revelation of his will, and that such a revelation could only be made manifest by supernatural circumstances.

Taking up the religion of the Bible in itself, we find that it stands preëminent in excellence above all other religious systems, both in the consistency of its doctrines and the higher tone of its ethics. It is this preëminence, always apparent in the study of comparative religions, and verified in its effects upon individual life, that has given the religion of the Bible intrinsic force to overthrow other sys-

tems and abide the changes and the progress of all past time, still strengthening its hold upon the faith and conscience of the world. The promise made to Abraham, that all the world should be blessed in his seed, implied the ultimate world-triumph of the religion which he represented. History, since Abraham's day, has constantly witnessed progress toward the fulfillment of this promise, and the belief that it shall be fully accomplished was never so widespread, nor appeared so well founded, as now.

The symbols of the early worship of the Hebrews were prophetic of spiritual unfoldings, and the early theocratic government suggestive of an ideal to be realized under the reign of Messiah. This was clearly the conception of the prophets, who saw the end of all types and emblems in the fuller revelations of a new dispensation. Between the Old and the New there is continuity and unity. The Christ who should come to fulfill all spiritual hopes and needs, to be a Saviour of Jews and Gentiles, and to establish the reign of heaven upon earth, was the focal point to which the light of prophecy was converged.

As for Jesus Christ, we have seen that he made himself the subject and center of his teachings. He set himself in the light of prophecy as the Messiah, whom the prophets had foretold should come. So far from the mythical development of a divine person out of the character of Jesus of Nazareth being

supposable—a process requiring centuries—Jesus clearly challenged in his life and work every test of divine character, and in his deeds and words laid the foundation of that faith which has ever since his day exalted him as the only begotten Son of God, the Christ of the prophets, and the Redeemer and Saviour of the world.

In his own personality Jesus appears without a companion among men. Appearing as a Jew in the time of Tiberius, when fear and wrong, added to the impulses of a proud and sensitive nature, had made the Jew narrow beyond his wont, we might almost say fierce and bitter against the world, Jesus exhibited sympathies and aims which were free from any touch of provincialism or national prejudice. His life and teaching belonged to humanity; and, as his apostle Paul interpreted him, "in Christ Jesus was neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." There were none too low for Jesus' compassion and help, none too sinful to hear from him the words of love and hope. The Gentile obtained his favor as well as the Jew. The Syrophœnician woman was counted an example of true faith in God above any in Israel. Jesus declared that many should "come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God," while the Jews, who claimed to be the children of the kingdom, should be cast out.

In his tenderness Jesus exhibited a courage never equaled. It was the great, the proud, the rulers of the people whom he rebuked. It was when, humanly speaking, he was in their power that he hurled against them the most withering rebukes and denunciations. He ignored the narrow prejudices of his people. He set aside the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees concerning Messiah's character and kingdom. He gave no place to the hatred of the Jew for his Roman oppressor. He charged the leaders of the Church with self-seeking and hypocrisy. He turned against himself, knowingly and deliberately, every conventional prejudice and every motive of self-interest. He saw, as the result of it all, the tragedy upon Mount Calvary, and moved toward it with unfaltering step—a sacrifice for all humanity in his assertion of the claims and privileges of all men before God, as against the usurpations of human pride and ambition. In that last struggle he appears as the representative of the divine compassion and purpose toward all men, arrayed against the powers of sin—the kingdom of heaven against the kingdom of darkness; and from that struggle he emerged immaculate, divine, and forever victorious in the faith of the world. Even as he said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

A character always impressed upon us in Jesus' life—a life which we must view as the one supreme

conflict of love and truth against the power of sin in the world—is its serenity. Jesus is ever calm. There appears in his mind and spirit no conflict. He seems not even to plan his work. He writes nothing, organizes nothing. He exhibits no alternations of fear and hope. He apologizes for nothing, corrects and explains nothing in his past. He admits no shadow of doubt upon his path, no possibility of error in his teachings, no chance for failure and disappointment to them who trust in him. Care and worry, as known to common men, were unknown to him. He was ever shrined in an atmosphere of repose. His goodness was spontaneous, above conventionalities and circumstances of time and place, yet ever beautifully adjusted to these conditions. He appeared upon a moral plane above the mists and shadows of our sin-cursed world. And yet, we see no struggling up to that supernal height. He appears upon it as one who descended from above, arrayed in the light of heaven, even as he was seen upon the mount of transfiguration, adumbrating the glory and kingdom which he has taught us to look for as no "cunningly devised fable."

Considered in himself directly, Jesus of Nazareth fulfills all that could be conceived of God manifest in the flesh. But his character appears so far above all human inventions, and is so rounded out from so many sources and testimonies, which are still perfectly accordant, and so sustained by words and

actions inimitable, attributed to him, and by results flowing from him, that it is impossible that he should be reckoned, in any sense, an ideal creation. In the clear white light of history and fact, he stands before the view of the world, "the chiefest among ten thousand," the one "altogether lovely."

But how has Jesus fulfilled his promise to the world?

In personal experience he has been a Saviour to them who trusted in him. The change which has come to them has not been ideal. By believing, they have not simply passed into a realm of visions, alluring to fancy, and followed lights which led to nothing. They have "passed from death unto life." The most degrading and terrible bondage to carnality has been broken off. Life has felt the influx of regenerating power, in new affections and hopes. Illustrious examples of virtue have been produced from men and women erstwhile bound in the thralldom of every vice. The witnesses of this transformation have been continued, and in increasing numbers, through every age since Jesus was upon earth. To-day they are a mighty mutitude, like that host which the apostle saw in his heavenly vision, singing, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Millions of men and women, by faith in Jesus, are now walking in the light of a divine life, in closest fellowship with the spiritual

world, and sustained amid earthly losses and trials by a power from above.

The world at large has felt the power of Jesus' life and death as an uplift to humanity. Hence come higher conceptions of the possibilities of man's nature, and stronger confidence in the over-watching care and unfailing compassion of our God. The thought of immortality is more strongly grasped. The relation of all men to the great Father is better understood, and thus power is given to rise above the world and "lay hold on eternal life," and man accepts as the supreme law of his life love to God and all mankind.

From the influence of Jesus the world is being quickened into new life. The impulse and spring of modern civilization is the Christian religion, which is represented, not merely in the organized Church, but in law, literature, social order, and public institutions.

To the influence of Christ is due the overthrow of tyranny, the liberation of slaves, the elevation of woman, the development of benevolence through so many institutions and agencies, the establishment of international law, the extension of the spirit of brotherhood, the recognition of the equal rights of man.

While ecclesiastical power, misguided, has, at times, stood in the path of progress, yet the very spirit and potency of the gospel of Christ made progress inevitable, in spite of this blind opposi-

tion. If the Church undertook to shut the human mind within the barriers of creed, the spirit of Christianity demanded liberty of conscience. If intolerant bigots, holding authority in the Church, put men to death for their religious convictions, the spirit of Christianity still nurtured men ready to become martyrs for conscience sake. In all this Christ himself was asserting his power, breaking asunder the bands with which human selfishness and ignorance would fetter him, and beyond these conventional barriers reaching forth to control the consciences and lives of all men.

Christianity is our inspiration for the future. Its possibilities are not exhausted, nor its force weakened; nor yet has it brought us to the promised goal. Its promise is to deliver mankind from oppression, to deliver the human mind from degrading error, and to deliver human life from the sway of beastly passions. Its triumphs advance toward this consummation. By virtue of what it has accomplished, it promises that each coming generation shall stand upon a higher plane of intelligence, power, and moral excellence.

A religion which thus fulfills the needs and hopes of man is not a false religion. It makes good its promise of redemption and salvation. That which answers man's highest need is to man the highest truth. That which meets the wants of man's nature represents to him the will and purpose of his Creator. The true religion reconciles

man to his Maker and opens the way for divine influences and blessings upon his life.

Jesus is the Saviour of men, the Saviour to whom the old dispensation pointed, and for whom it prepared the way. He is our Saviour from sin, from moral helplessness, and from the fear of death. He is the Saviour of the nations, the light of all time, the Alpha and Omega of our hopes. In the eloquent language of Dr. Richard S. Storrs, we would close this chapter and this volume:

"Amid whatever changes of arts, letters, institutions, empires, one figure remains supreme in history. It is that of the Man whom John baptized, whom Pilate crucified; who built no capital, led no army, wrote no volume; who seemed to the principal persons of his time to have fitly closed a restless life in an ignoble death; but who named himself, and who now is named in all the written languages of mankind, the Son of God.

"The brilliant names of orators, soldiers, skillful inventors, sagacious statesmen, gradually fade in the vividness of their luster as other generations follow that to which their genius was first exhibited. But the name of Jesus continues to command, and ever more widely, the love, the reverence, the obedience of mankind. Careers so splendid in comparison of his, and so rich in governing forces, that to rank his beside them would have looked to the cultivated men of his time like a balancing of Nazareth against the Rome of Au-

gustus, have been lost from sight and even from recollection, as the race has moved from them across the expanse of peaceful or stormy years; but his career remains always in sight, like the star which shines in its serene heights, when the light-house lamp, which near at hand glittered more brightly, has sunk beneath the lifting horizon. More than sixty generations of men, vexed with thought, burdened with cares, and each accomplishing, wearily or victoriously, its office in the world, have lived and wrought, and passed away, since the young child Jesus lay on his mother's breast at Bethlehem; yet they are to-day more numerous in the world, and more influential than ever before, who turn with profoundly attentive minds, because with profoundly adoring hearts, to consider what he was, and to ponder the things which he said and did. This fact is susceptible of no explanation which does not discredit human nature itself, unless we clearly accept this Man—so humble in his circumstances, but in his influences so peerless and universal—as what he claimed to be, Immanuel—God with us. The standing miracle,' as Coleridge describes it, 'of a Christendom commensurate and almost synonymous with the civilized world,' not only compensates for the necessary evanescence of some evidence for the gospel, enjoyed by the primitive Christians, but it supplies a demonstration of the divinity revealed through humanity in the person of the Lord, than

which the wonders of wisdom and power related of him by those who saw them were not more signal or convincing."

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."